LATEST WAR NEWS.

The Post

Sunday Special

1/2D.

NO. 489. SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1914. [REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER.]

LATEST FROM LONDON.

A QUIET CHRISTMAS.

UNFULFILLED GERMAN THREATS.

EARL OF DALHOUSIE'S CONDITION.

MEN FROM TRENCHES HAVE GOOD TIME.

London, Saturday Midnight.

The Christmas that has just said goodbye will long be remembered by the Londoner for many reasons.

All the customary outside rowdyness, shouting, and singing were most conspicuous by their absence.

I should think this has been the quietest Christmas in the annals of history.

Everybody seemed to have done their shopping early, and on Christmas Eve the city streets were almost deserted. Shops closed early, and by nine or ten o'clock everything was dreadfully quiet. A thin pall of fog overhung the city itself, but outside in the suburbs the fog was so thick that it seemed as if one could have cut out a chunk with a knife.

Then came the day itself, bright and snappy, with a bite of the good old time "Jack Frost." Even this sort of typical weather did not entice the people from their bright firesides.

Along the Strand, in Piccadilly and Leicester Square there was scarcely a soul to be seen. So full of emptiness did the place appear that I was tempted to walk or ride right home and read once again Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." Had Goldsmith been amongst us to-day he would have written the very same thing about London as it appeared at Christmas time 1914, and no one would have found fault with him as being a stranger to the truth.

Mistletoe at a Premium.

In spite of German threats to periodically bombard our east coast, people have been away just as usual to their favourite east coast resorts. Not a few paid a visit to the Yorkshire coast to see with their own eyes the ruins caused by the raid of the German murderers. Those who remained at home spent Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in the same jovial spirit as of yore. The huge turkeys, geese, and lumps of beef have been devoured as formerly. The gaiety has been just the same indoors, but men and women have not been able to embrace each other under the hidden mistletoe. This year mistletoe and holly have been particularly scarce. No matter where one went mistletoe and holly were at a decided premium. The scarcity was so marked, in fact, that dealers kept the red and white berries hidden well away, and when anyone happened to ask for some an astounding price was charged.

Most of the mistletoe, of course, comes from the gardens of France. Our gallant Tommies have captured a great deal of the supply for the purpose of decorating the trenches. Where the rest has gone to it is difficult to discover. The fact remains that the price in London was four times the amount charged last year.

Unfulfilled Threats.

During the past day or two Londoners have displayed a sort of delighted expectancy. To tell you the truth, they expected some kind of Christmas gift from Kaiser Bill, or that ever-obliging Von Tirpitz. Our appetites were partially satisfied when the news came that a hostile aeroplane had ventured as far as Dover, but, like Oliver Twist, we wanted more. These Germans have a measly way of doing business. They promise you goods which they never deliver. They make threats which they hope will give the Britisher a shiver of fear. Instead of that we only laugh and wait for the adventure. London is still waiting cheerfully. Dover and Southend have had their curiosity partially satisfied. People in Sheerness and Southend were calmly partaking of an excellent Christmas dinner when the booming of guns brought them outside. Yes, sure enough the Kaiser was sending them something. Hostile aeroplanes were circling around, and what did the frightened people do? Rush to their cellars and huddle in corners in fear and trembling. Not likely. They went to the cliffs to enjoy the fun. What a peculiar people these British must be.

Old Lady's Fears of Invasion.

The latest threat of Von Tirpitz Londoners look upon as a huge joke. They simply laugh at the Admiral and his notion of huge submarines to starve the British into submission. It reminds them forcibly of a letter which a convict once sent to the governor of the prison in which he was incarcerated. "Dear Governor," the letter ran, "this is to inform you that unless you let me out of prison, I shall be under the painful necessity of burgling your house.—Bill Sikes." Besides, even the most ignorant know that the first rule of strategy in warfare is to keep your plan of campaign a secret. No, Herr Von Tirpitz, the British public, in this instance, is not a blooming ass.

Yet this talk of invasion and starvation has its effect on some people. On the Bakerloo tube to-night an elderly lady was astounded, in view of an aerial invasion, that all the lights in the carriages should be burning as usual. "But, my dear lady," a fellow-passenger observed, "we are under ground. Men in aeroplanes cannot see the lights!" "Well what about the submarines?" the old lady observed. "I get so mixed up with these funny names," she added quite ingeniously.

Lord Dalhousie's Condition.

That was a queer sort of story which got into the papers the other day with regard to the Earl of Dalhousie, who, it was reported, had been saved by his valet after being wounded at the front. I called round at Hyde Park Gardens to get fuller details of this gallant deed. The butler smiled. "There is nothing in the story," he said. No doubt his Grace's valet would have been delighted to render such assistance as the papers mention, but the story is all wrong. When wounded his Grace was picked up by the ambulance men, and his valet did not see him until afterwards.

The Earl of Dalhousie, as most of you are aware, is a Forfarshire man, and the people of his native shire will be pleased to learn that his Lordship is rapidly recovering from the wound inflicted. Her Ladyship, to whom the news quite naturally came as a terrible blow, is bearing up with wonderful fortitude now that the better news has come through.

Men From the Front.

The Tommies who have had the privilege of spending Christmas at home instead of in the trenches, where they have been fighting so hard this last few months, appreciated the flying visit with no little gratification. Once more these brave fellows have been permitted to dine in the fascinating West End, and right royally they dined, too. They were the heroes of the hour, and many were the compliments and kindly words spoken about them. All these little attentions help to cheer up the lads, if they required any such cheering up, for, truth to tell, these troops from the front appeared in their ways more like schoolboys home for holidays than hardened soldiers from the trenches. And they were just the same on Christmas Day when the time came for them to leave again for the front.

RUSSIANS' LATEST HAUL OF PRISONERS.

TROOP AND HOSPITAL TRAINS IN COLLISION.

WALKING-STICK RIFLES FOR GERMAN SNIPERS.

Petrograd, Saturday Night.

The Russian General Staff issue the following bulletin to-night:—

On the left bank of the Vistula the general position shows no essential change.

Between the lower course of the Vistula and the Pilitza the fighting on the 25th inst. was less desperate, with the exception of the region adjacent to the Pilitza, where vigorous fighting went on all day and night.

The fighting with the Austrians on the lower course of the Nida had the same desperate character.

We took sixty-eight officers and about four thousand men prisoners in that district on the 24th.

In Galicia the fighting along the whole front is favourable to the Russian Armies.

RIFLES SHAPED LIKE WALKING-STICKS.

GERMAN SNIPERS' CURIOUS EQUIPMENT.

Petrograd, Saturday Night.

The Russian troops in East Prussia have found many civilians provided with gun sticks outwardly resembling ordinary walking sticks.

Hitherto it has been somewhat of a mystery how the Russians marching through villages have frequently been shot in the back without the culprit being discovered.—Reuter.

HOSPITAL TRAIN IN COLLISION WITH EXPRESS TROOP TRAIN.

400 Killed; 500 Injured.

Petrograd, Saturday Night.

A Warsaw telegram says that 400 persons have been killed and 500 injured in a collision at Kalish between a crowded troop train from Prussia and a train returning with wounded officers.

Both trains were running at full speed.

Over twenty carriages were smashed up.

It appears that the points were changed at the last moment.

The pointsman, the stationmaster, and other officials have been arrested on a charge of treason.

MORE BOMB-DROPPING BY GERMANS.

100 PEOPLE INJURED AND HOUSES FIRED.

Petrograd, Saturday Night.

Five German aeroplanes dropped bombs on Sokatcheff, setting fire to numerous wooden houses, and destroying a market place.

One bomb burst in the middle of a crowd of persons, killing eight and wounding twenty-six.

The total number of victims was over 100.—Reuter.

CART LOADS OF GIFTS CAPTURED.

RUSSIAN FORCE'S HAUL.

The Russians have captured, among other impedimenta of the Germans, two carts loaded with Christmas presents for the German troops.

The capture reminds one of that larger capture during the first invasion of Poland, when the Russian troops secured several railway waggon loads of packets of chocolate, a present of the German Empress to troops for the taking of Warsaw.

TERRIFIC FIGHT FOR RIVER CROSSING.

GERMAN REGIMENTS WIPED OUT.

The losses sustained by the Germans during the fifty-six hours' incessant attacks by day and night to force the passage of the Rivers Bzura, Rawka, and Pilitsa have been appalling.

As this is not work which can be profitably entrusted to new formations, it is probable that these awful losses fall entirely upon Germany's best troops. Their opponents were the now famous Siberian Rifles At this point alone on the first night seven thousand Germans were killed in vainly attempting to force the passage across the river.

Most of the battalions here annihilated belonged to Wurtemberg, and had recently been brought across from the French front.

The following night two companies which had crossed by a small footbridge suffered a similar fate. Next day in the same region the Germans succeeded in getting across to the right bank about two thousand men under cover of a very heavy cannonade.

That night the Russians succeeded in destroying this force also, notwithstanding the fact that the Germans were quite prepared for a night attack.

Nearly a mile away the Russians found themselves illuminated by German rockets and searchlights, and their columns marched to the attack under a hail of Maxim, rifle, and shrapnel fire.

The German positions were taken at the point of the bayonet, and at one point alone twelve hundred German dead were counted.

SIBERIANS' AMAZING ATTACKS

STAGGER GERMAN OFFICERS.

The great exploits in the present fighting are the work of the famous body of Siberian Rifles, who had already made a lasting name for themselves in the fight before Warsaw during the first invasion of Poland.

The Siberian Rifles are backwoodsmen accustomed to life in the open, and are hunters and scouts and handymen by the nature of their service, which is passed entirely in the almost inaccessible depths of the Siberian virgin forests, in which they are pioneers.

German officers who have been made prisoners of war expressed their amazement at the dash with which these Siberian Rifles rushed to the attack, and said they could not have believed it possible to attack under the circumstances.

RUSSIANS LOOK VICTORS.

A WAR OF EXHAUSTION IN POLAND.

When it comes to doing without roads and railways and other railway facilities, the Russians are better men than the Germans.

The Russians will also be better able than their adversaries to support the terribly hard weather conditions that now obtain in Poland.

Thus, if the outcome of the present struggle for Warsaw is a question of endurance, and it looks as if it is, the Russians ought to be the victors.

It is probable, however, that the victors will be almost as exhausted as the vanquished, and that after the violent activity of the past few weeks there will be a period of enforced quietness for both sides to recuperate.

RUSSIA'S GIFT TO JAPAN

IN RETURN FOR HEAVY ARTILLERY.

Washington, Saturday.

The Japanese Embassy has received official advices that Russia has ceded to Japan the Russian half of the Island of Takhalin in return for heavy guns sent for use with the Russian Army in the present war.

Reutter's agency adds that by the Peace of Portsmouth, which terminated the Russo-Japanese War, Russia gave up to Japan half of the Island of Takhalin. The whole of the island now becomes Japanese

FANATICAL ATTACK IN RAIN STORM.

HOW RUSSIANS ROUTED KURD CHARGE.

Petrograd, Saturday Night.

The Turkish troops which attacked the Russians in the district of Van were composed of 20,000 infantry, besides numerous detachments of cavalry.

The Kurds attacked with fanatical ardour in torrents of rain.

The Russians, who were well informed by clever reconnoitring, repulsed the enemy, and delivered a vigorous counter-attack, which put him to rout.—Reuter.

ITALIAN BLUEJACKETS LANDED

TO SUPPRESS RIOTING AT VALONA.

Rome, Saturday.

With regard to the landing of Italian bluejackets at Valona yesterday, the Giornale D'Italia states that they landed as the result of riotous disorders and threats of fresh brawling.

The landing actually took place at the request of the Italian Consul, that an end might be put to the state of anarchy which prevailed in the town owing to the fighting which followed upon the order for the expulsion of the refugees.

Order was completely restored, adds the journal, to the gratification of the population, which is joyful in its gratitude to the Italians for their intervention.

No further material incident has occurred.—Reuter.

KING'S MOTORS FOR WOUNDED.—The King has given orders for motor cars in the Royal mews to be placed at the disposal of the Volunteer Motor Ambulance Corps, the object of which is to transport wounded soldiers treated in the Metropolitan area.

ALLIES GAINING GROUND.

STRONG GERMAN ATTACKS REPULSED.

ENEMY'S ARTILLERY SILENCED.

Paris, Saturday.

The French official communique this evening says:—

Yesterday there was a cannonade of no great intensity between the sea and the Lys, where a thick fog paralysed operations.

Between the Lys and the Oise we repulsed several counter-attacks by the enemy at Nouvelles (west of Lens), at La Boiselle (north west of Alberta), and at Lihons (west of Chaulnes), where a trench taken from the enemy was lost and then recaptured after a sharp engagement.

Between the Oise and Aisne we learn that during the day of the 24th a very strong German attack was repulsed.

At Chivry (north-west of Souper), in the region of Perthes, our artillery silenced batteries which were bombarding the trenches recently taken by our troops.

Two strong German counter-attacks were repulsed in the course of Thursday night.

Yesterday a fresh counter-attack, which was particularly violent along a front of 1500 metres, and was carried out with important effectives, was completely checked.

In the Argonne and between the Meuse and Moselle there is nothing to report.

In Upper Alsace the day was marked by appreciable progress. In front of Cerroy we reached the edge of the woods on the hills to the west of the town, and we maintained our position there.

In spite of several counter-attacks we are occupying the outskirts of Lower Aspach and the heights which overlook Carspach to the west.

RUSSIA.

The Germans, who had forced the Bzura to the south of Sochaczor, have been driven back after sustaining considerable losses. All their attacks on Bolimoff have failed

In the region of Inowlodz, on the Pilica, and to the south obstinately-contested engagements continue.

Along the whole course of the Nida and to south of the Vistula the battle is proceeding in conditions favourable to the Russians.—P.A. War Special.

LATEST OFFICIAL REPORT.

Paris, Saturday.

The official communique issued this evening states:—

No news of importance has yet been communicated to us this evening from the front as a whole.—C.N.

GERMAN VERSION OF SITUATION.

Amsterdam, Saturday.

A Berlin telegram gives the following official bulletin, dated December 26:—

Near Nieuport, on the nights of December 24 and 25 French and British attacks were repulsed.

In important battles in the district of Lihons, south-east of Amiens, and Tracy-le-val, north-east of Compiegne, we captured about 200 prisoners.

In the Vosges, south of Diedolshausend, and in Upper Alsace, west of Sennbernn, and south-west of Altkirch, there were small battles yesterday, but the situation there has not changed.

On the afternoon of December 20 a French aviator dropped nine bombs on the village of Mov, though there were only hospitals there, which were clearly visible to airmen. No important damage was done.

In reply to this action and to the dropping of bombs over the open town of Freiburg, beyond the operation line, medium calibre bombs were dropped this morning in the position of Nancy.

On the Eastern theatre the Russian attacks on the position near Lotzen were repulsed, and 1000 prisoners fell into our hands.

In Northern Poland, north of the Vistula, the situation is unchanged. South of the Vistula our attacks on the Bzura have progressed up to the banks of the Politza.

South-east of the Omerzow our offensive was accompanied by success. Further south the situation is unchanged.—Reuter.

ZEPPELIN DROPS BOMBS ON NANCY.

INHABITANTS KILLED AND WOUNDED.

Nancy, Saturday.

A Zeppelin airship flew over Nancy at 5.20 this morning, and threw fourteen bombs on the town.

Two of the inhabitants were killed and two wounded, while a number of private houses were damaged. No public building was hit.—Reuter.

"DON'T SHOOT, SCOTLAND."

GERMANS POSE AS INDIAN SOLDIERS.

Private (C. E. G.) Brown, of the London Scottish, writing to friends at Kew:—

I had just got into our trenches and placed my rifle in a firing position when an attack came. Turning round I saw a farmhouse alight in our rear with figures silhouetted against the light coming towards us.

When challenged the answer came—"Indians. Don't shoot, Scotland."

Needless to say, our reply to such treachery was a heavy volley which caused not a few to drop. The rest sank down among the turnips.

Thus we found the Germans in front and rear and in our trenches. It was a case of every alternate man firing in opposite directions.

KING ALBERT HONOURS FRENCH OFFICERS.

Paris, Saturday.

The Havre correspondent of the Matin today states that King Albert, in recognition of the bravery by French troops and marines in defence of the Yser, in co-operation with the Belgians, has conferred the Order of Leopold on numbers of French officers.—P.A. War Special.

REINFORCEMENTS FOR GENERAL FRENCH.

RAPID PROGRESS OF KITCHENER'S NEW ARMY

WILL LEAD TO ITS EARLY DISPATCH TO THE FRONT.

(BY OUR MILITARY CORRESPONDENT.)

London, Saturday Midnight.

Many quite well-meaning people would like to have seen a truce arranged for the period of "peace on earth, goodwill towards men," but though the Pope lent the weight of his influence to this end there was never any likelihood of the Powers assenting to such a course.

A truce offers a very substantial advantage to an enemy fighting on what is known as interior lines, and the Allies were certainly in no mood to yield such advantage to Germany at the present moment.

> Germany, on the other hand, would have eagerly welcomed an armistice, even for the space of twenty-four hours. At no time since the war began has she experienced greater difficulty than she experiences now of getting on both frontiers at once.

This difficulty needs to be emphasised, because it affords some measure of the success attending the strategy of the Allies.

The policy which General Joffre is pursuing in the West, in co-operation with the Grand Duke Nicholas in the East, is to apply steady, persistent, unremitting pressure all along the line of battle to prevent the enemy from throwing overwhelming forces into either theatre of war.

A Temporary Measure.

The Prussian War Lords cannot send big reinforcements into the West without inviting disaster in the East, and even the action of sending three or four army corps to the assistance of General von Hindenberg in Poland, whilst it has released the pressure upon Silesia, has tended greatly to weaken the position the Germans held three weeks ago in Flanders and the North of France.

But it must not be imagined that the Allies will be content indefinitely to occupy the enemy in this fashion. As a temporary measure, pending the arrival of the reinforcements which will soon be available, the tactics which are being pursued are the tactics which any modern commander would adopt in similar circumstances.

But there are indications already that these will shortly be abandoned for a more vigorous offensive, particularly in the West.

Surprising Progress.

In attempting to estimate the precise time when a general forward advance will be attempted, it is important to remember that Lord Kitchener's new armies have come on very much faster than either Lord Kitchener or anyone else ever expected. In calculating the time that would be required to equip these hundreds of thousands of new recruits to take their place in the fighting line, no one quite took account of the fact that the men would be drawn from a higher and perhaps more intelligent class than that which yields us the majority of our recruits in peace time.

All the sergeant instructors at the different training centres pay testimony in vigorous military language to the comparative ease with which they have been able to instil efficiency into the men of Lord Kitchener's new armies. Coupled with this higher intelligence, too, there has been a keenness to learn for which even the most optimistic were unprepared.

Steady Reinforcements.

"The soldiers are splendid," is the saying of every officer who comes home from the front. "The new men are wonderful," is the saying of all those who have been to Aldershot, Salisbury Plain, or wherever else Lord Kitchener's men are in training.

The rapid progress which has been made will enable Lord Kitchener to send reinforcements to General French very much earlier than was anticipated. Very soon the first of these drafts will proceed to the front, and thereafter reinforcements will be continuously poured into France. Simultaneously General Joffre will be in a position to bring great reserves into action.

Joffre Will Be Able to Strike Hard.

The effect of all this must very speedily show itself in the operations in the Western theatre of war. During the past fortnight we have seen the Allies in a position to assume a successful offensive. The progress made may not have been very substantial from the point of view of mere distance, but it argues already a preponderance of numbers in men, and a very marked superiority in the matter of artillery. Without such preponderance and superiority no advance whatever would have been possible in modern conditions of warfare.

These premises being accepted, and they are incontestible, it follows that when the reinforcements now preparing are thrown into the fighting line the balance of power in the West will be altogether altered. The scales will then be heavily in favour of the Allies, and General Joffre will be in a position to strike quickly and to strike hard.

Enemy's Plans Upset.

In the meantime the operations now taking place are serving the double purpose of keeping enormous forces of Germans occupied in the West to the utter derangement of all the enemy's plans in the East, and of preparing the ground for General Joffre's great blow when the time comes for a general advance.

The record of the last few days has been one of almost uninterrupted progress, and though this progress has not at any point involved a retirement of the Germans beyond the prepared lines immediately in their rear, the ground won has been solidly maintained, and is to this campaign in France very much what the outer forts of Liege were to the general scheme and its defence.

Situation in the East.

Whilst the progress in France and Flanders is a matter for unalloyed satisfaction, the news from the East is also more reassuring than a week ago we had any reason to expect. General von Hindenberg's attempt to hack his way through to Warsaw is likely to meet with no more success than the attempts in the West to hack a way through to Paris and to Calais.

The Russians appear to have made their position secure on both their flanks, and though fierce fighting is still proceeding in the centre, the Grand Duke Nicholas appears successfully to have parried the vital blow at Warsaw itself.

Whilst the Austro-German advance has been checked, however, it would be foolish to shut our eyes to the fact that General von Hindenberg has achieved one at least of the objects he had in view.

Russians Forced to Retire.

It has always been urged in this column that the news available was not sufficient to show whether, in warding off the blow on Warsaw, the Grand Duke Nicholas had been compelled to loosen his grip on Cracow.

But we now know that the Russian armies which were threatening Silesia have been obliged to retire over a distance which, in this difficult country, may be said roughly to represent two or three days' march. Two causes have contributed to this result. One was the German advance on Warsaw, the other was the Austrian advance on Galicia, which, while it threatened to turn the Russian left flank, incidentally gave the Serbians their opportunity, and enabled them to recover Belgrade.

The successes of the Allies in the West have, to some extent, been balanced by reverses in the East. Warsaw, the position of which is really vital to all the Russian plans, still remains intact. But the advance into Germany's industrial district of Silesia has been checked and delayed, and to that extent the duration of the war is likely to be extended.

A General Look Round.

With 1915 looming close ahead, and somewhere about fifteen million men still rehearsing Armageddon on the Continent, there is a natural tendency to take a general survey of events at this moment

Outwardly the situation is everywhere very much what it was a month ago. The dishevelled war-stained armies face each other east and west in battered trenches across an ooze of mud. Those grim lines extend from the North Sea to the Swiss mountains, and from the Baltic to the Carpathians.

The fortunes of war sway and ebb with little local fluctuations, but generally the situation is static. The artillery roars far behind the lines of actual contact. The crackle of rifle and machine guns is intermittent. Occasionally the sapping and counter-sapping is varied by a bayonet-clash, and the clay-soaked troops pelt each other with jam-tin bombs.

The impressive feature of these modern battlefields is the strange sense of desolate depopulation. There are no armies to be seen. The whole business is subterranean. Just the Angel of Death broods over it all, and claims it has been estimated, an average east and west of about one hundred thousand men a month. And even this is entirely apart from any special slaughter when some grand coup may be attempted.

Depression in Berlin.

To the casual observer this sort of thing might seem to be interminable until such time as the whole manhood of Europe finds rest at last beneath the tortured earth.

But already there are signs below the surface of an exhaustion which is moral, physical, and economic. A great change has taken place in the tone of the German people, and the temperamental Teuton is developing a most ominous depression of spirit.

Berlin no longer talks with a military swagger of Germany's European triumph and world-wide dominion. The talk is now of a desperate fight against hopeless odds to save the Fatherland. Coincident with this change of tone comes timid speculation about peace. Berlin would like to make terms now, if possible, while she still has something to barter with, and devious influences are being exerted to that end. This explains why the French Premier, M. Viviani, has publicly repudiated at this moment any settlement of the sort that Germany has in mind.

Only the egregious vanity of the Prussian intellect could dream that Europe, after such sacrifices, would be willing to purchase a transcient respite now at the price of a worse "frightfulness" hereafter. M. Viviani's terms are Mr Asquith's terms and the Czar's terms. Heroic Belgium must be reconstructed from the dust, and her independence vindicated for all time. France must regain her lost provinces, and the claws of the Prussian Eagle must be clipped for ever.

Our New Armies.

Before the spring, perhaps early in the New Year, we shall have half a million more men in France. From first to last we have already sent over some four hundred thousand, and have now over three hundred thousand men in the fighting line. We are prepared to make that number into a million and a half long before next June.

The French have trained and equipped even larger reserves. And the Allies now hold the advantage in the thing most essential of all next to the men. Our artillery now outweighs and out-ranges the German's decisively. I hear that we are equipping our field artillery with a new and improved French 75, admittedly the most formidable mobile gun in existence. How this will simplify the campaign in the important matter of ammunition supply columns it is hardly necessary to point out. Meanwhile the French are largely utilising their Territorials for trench work. Their younger first line troops are being given a rest until the time comes for a real dash, and very much the same policy is being pursued in respect of our own troops.

GERMAN PATROL IN COLLISION

WITH BRITISH FORCE ON ORANGE RIVER.

Pretoria, Saturday.

The following official communique was issued here to-day:—

Colonel Bouwer reports that a skirmish took place on Wednesday morning at Gudous Drift, on the north bank of the Orange River, between a portion of the Carnarvon commando and a patrol of sixty Germans, who had dismounted and taken up a position during the night, from which they had fired on our scouts.

On the following morning a supporting patrol was sent up from the Carnarvon commando, whereupon the Germans retired.

Our losses were two killed and one wounded, while the enemy had one killed and two wounded.—Reuter.

A special rate of half-pay of £2000 a year during the period of the war has been granted to Admiral Prince Louis of Battenberg, who resigned his office of First Sea Lord recently.

2,000,000 IS ESTIMATE

OF GERMAN LOSSES.

25,000 OFFICERS HAVE BEEN KILLED.

Copenhagen, Saturday.

The German casualty lists numbered 101 to 108 contain the names of 35,883 killed, wounded, and missing officers and men, bringing the total Prussian losses to 753,202.

There are to be added eighty Saxon, eighty-two Wurtemberg, 125 Bavarian, and thirteen navy lists.

The Bavarian losses are so heavy that it may be calculated that nearly half their army is out of action.

The German losses up to date, including those not yet published, may be set down as about 250,000 dead, 400,000 missing, and 850,000 wounded, bringing the total to about one and a half million.

With the Saxon, Wurtemberg, Bavarian, and navy losses, the German losses must be together about two millions.

About 25,000 officers have been killed, and 25,000 officers wounded, but only 4000 officers are missing.

According to information from Vienna, the Austro-Hungarian casualties are calculated at about one and a half million officers and men killed, wounded, and missing.

The casualties from the east front are now beginning very slowly to appear. The 1305 Dragoon Regiment lost at Wielke on November 11 all four squadrons.

The 212 Reserve Infantry Regiment lost more than two thousand officers and men killed or wounded in the fighting during October at Dixmude.

FALKIRK NATIONAL RESERVIST

DROWNED IN CANAL LOCK

While Going on Patrol Duty.

Pirbright, Saturday Night.

While returning at night from Pirbright Camp to resume duty as a railway patrol at Pirbright Junction Private Matthew Brown, a national reservist, attached to the 7th Batt. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, in crossing the lock gates of the canal fell into the water and was drowned.

Deceased was a pipe moulder in Callendar Iron Works, Falkirk, aged forty-eight, and had previously served as a regular in the regiment to which he was attached.

A Coroner's jury this evening returned a verdict of accidental death.—P.A.

ABERDEEN STEAMER RESCUES

SHIP-WRECKED CREW IN NORTH SEA.

Scarborough, Saturday.

A Lloyd's Scarborough message says:—

The Norwegian steamer Eli, of Haugesund, for Rouen laden with coals struck a mine in the North Sea.

The vessel sank, and all the crew, numbering fifteen, were saved, also the pilot, and landed here.

Aberdeen, Saturday.

Information has reached Aberdeen that the steamer Alastair, belonging to that port, while on a voyage from Montrose to London, rescued fifteen men off Scarborough.

The men were from the steamer Eli, of Handersund.

DAUGHTER TO KING AND QUEEN OF ITALY.

Rome, Saturday.

The Queen of Italy to-day gave birth to a daughter.

TURKISH PEOPLE'S PROTEST.

Discoveries at Government Arsenal.

Paris, Saturday.

The Herald's Athens correspondent states that placards attacking the Young Turk Committee have been found posted at the Constantinople Arsenal declaring its policy disastrous for Turkey and the Caliphate.

The King has given £100 to the British Ambulance Committee, whose object is to succour the French wounded.

FORMIDABLE CHAIN OF FORTS

WILL CONFRONT ALLIES WHEN THEY ENTER ENEMY'S TERRITORY.

GERMANY IS ONE BIG FORTRESS.

If the allies transfer the theatre of war to German territory they will face quite as difficult a task as did the forces of the Kaiser when first they poured through Belgium into France.

It is almost possible to say that all Germany to the westward of the Rhine is one titanic fortress, ready to give as many blows as it takes.

For forty years Germany has been getting ready against an invasion from the west—from France. Her entire system of forts is built to this end.

They have been placed in two long lines with every gun commanding the west, an inner chain and an outer chain of defences, of which the inner chain along the River Rhine is by far the more formidable. But let this not detract from the power of the other string of fortifications along the frontier.

This outer chain of defences stretches from Diedenhofen—it used to be Thionville—to Metz, once the proudest possession of the French, and thence south-easterly to the Gap of Belfort and the Swiss frontier near Hungen.

Metz to-day is one of the strongholds of Europe, with batteries crowded with the heaviest modern artillery that Germany can muster. Strassburg is another giantess among fortified cities, because she is one of the keys to the entire frontier. Ringed with forts, she will demand thousands of lives before she falls before any invader.

Strongest Point on Frontier.

Metz is the strongest point on the German frontier. Awful battles have been waged there in bygone years—the last in the Franco-Prussian War—and more may come. Every fort that guards its approaches is complete in itself, but all have communications, one with the others. Wing batteries, commanding every line of approach, stand menacingly, and every position is jammed with the wickedest machine guns that Bertha Krupp can turn out. Armoured batteries, intrenched infantry positions, shelters and magazines complete the girdle of defences which connect all the forts of Metz and the surrounding country. And out in front, 9000 yards nearer France, a chain of cupola forts has lately been erected. Everything about them is a secret of the German War Office.

Strassburg, on the left of the line, is equal in strength to Metz. Wellnigh impregnable earthworks surround the city, and four miles of outside the limits is a chain of fifteen cupola forts of the most modern type, another secret of the Kaiser's.

Where Railways Converge.

To the rear of Diedhofen is one of Germany's greatest reliances—a convergence of railways into one great junction, where four main lines and several minor branches feed the frontier between Diedenhofen and Chateau-Salins. By their means troops can be rushed to any threatened point in wonderfully short order. For the past six weeks this point has undoubtedly been the head of the line of communication for the German Army operating in the neighbourhood of Verdun.

Saarburg, in Prussia, to the north-east of Metz, and another Saarburg to the south of Alsace, are important railway junctions from which troops can be distributed anywhere along the neighbouring line.

The main railway to France runs through this latter city and feeds another network of military railways from Chateau-Salins southerly to the foothills of the Vosges Mountains, which form a natural barrier between France and Germany. Back of them are more German fortifications running in a chain down to the Swiss frontier. Strong as is this string of forts, military experts appear to think that they are really contrived more as bases for assaults upon France than as points at which an invasion of Germany is to be repulsed.

On the Rhine.

The real line of German defence is the River Rhine. In case of repulse the Germans would fall back slowly upon this natural support, which they have improved artificially such as no other river-line in all the world is fortified.

Strassburg, a bristling fortress with no counterpart in any other country in all the world, is the left of this line of the Rhine. All the network of military railways converge along hereabouts, fully equal to the task of pouring back the retreating armies to their second—and perhaps last—stand. Saarlouis would form strong protection to the defeated armies reforming in the valley between the Rhine and the Moselle.

Wessel, far up on the Dutch frontier, is the extreme right of the tremendous line stretching up the Rhine through Dusseldorf, Cologne, Coblenz, Mayence (Mainz in German), and thence along a line of fortifications to Strassburg, the last and southernmost point of importance. Here the river is fortified on both sides and terraced for the heaviest artillery. Strassburg is the key to all south-western Germany. Once she falls a French invasion of Wurtemburg is easy with Belfort as a base.

GERMAN NATION IS CONFIDENT

OF FINAL VICTORY

BECAUSE THEY HAVE STRONGER NERVES.

Amsterdam, Saturday.

During the last few days a series of articles appeared in the German press which have no other object than to appease the growing uneasiness among the German population, which is still waiting for the publication of the "tremendous successes" of the Hindenberg Army in the East and of the "progress" of the Germans in the Western theatre of war.

The latest article of this kind was published in the Vossische Zeitung under the heading, "The Stronger Nerves," in which the writer says—"We shall be victorious because we have the stronger nerves. Thus Hindenberg spoke, and his words were confirmed by the Emperor.

"An army leader must have strong nerves, but must not be nervous. With iron grip he must seize his adversary, fight him down, and destroy him. But there is nothing he wants more than a cool, calm, and composed temperament once his plans have been unsuccessful. Napoleon boasted that he never thought beforehand what to do after a victory, but always what to do after a defeat. It is as the very moral of a high commander that the German people regard its proved Field-Marshal, Von Hindenberg. He is the man with the stronger nerves. But like the army leader the people must also have strong nerves and not be nervous.

Temporary Reverses.

"The Germans have shown," the writer continues, "that they have strong nerves, stronger probably than those of all our adversaries. But the Germans must always remember the word of the Kaiser, that one has always to reckon in war with temporary reverses, and the advice from Von Hindenberg's headquarters not to become impatient. If one good report follows another there is no special merit in being free from nervousness.

"It is unavoidable that in such a great number of extended theatres of war lamentable incidents should now and again happen—such as the evacuation of Belgrade by our Austrian allies. Such incidents can never be avoided, and from time to time such sacrifices in the interest of the general plan have to be made.

"It is just at such moments that it is especially necessary not to be nervous, and not to become impatient in the expectation of a counter-stroke. It is at such a moment that the spirit of the people must show itself.

Belief in Final Victory.

"With proud satisfaction we can record the fact that the great majority of the Germans have fulfilled the requirement at all times since the beginning of the hostilities.

"As a rule the unconditional belief in final victory exists. This belief will not be disappointed, and the German nation at home will prove that it has 'strong nerves.'

"Every fresh day brings fresh fights. In East and West heavy fighting is going on. However long it may last, the German people will maintain its confidence in our heroic armies, will wait without impatience for the final issue, and will always repeat what Marshal Von Hindenberg and the Kaiser have said, 'We shall be victorious because we have the stronger nerves.'"—Reuter.

KAISER DECLARED FOR PEACE

WHILE ALL THE TIME HE PREPARED FOR WAR.

REMARKABLE EXPOSURE OF TACTICS.

Whatever other place William II. may occupy when the history of his times is written, he is certain to be acknowledged as one of the greatest leaders of men in every field of activity that the world has known. He ascended the throne in 1888, to find Prince Bismarck at the height of his power.

Politically the Empire was divided by apparently irreconcilable parties, which were kept in order only by the iron hand of the great Chancellor, who, from the formation of the Empire under William I., had been the absolute master of the nation.

The new Emperor, animated by enthusiasm for a policy of national development, and believing in a high destiny for his people and himself, soon dismissed the aged Prime Minister and took personal command of the affairs of State—a command he has never relinquished for a single moment.

Militarist From the Start.

With the opening of his reign William II. fostered a military policy so vast that in a few years he turned Europe into a great army camp. No expense was spared and no burden was too great to be placed upon his people, already the most heavily taxed in the world.

Opposition to his programme crumbled before his imperious will and before the remarkably adroit manner in which he placated the pacificists, even the Socialists yielding to him under his promises of industrial reforms, which promises he kept scrupulously.

But hand-in-hand with his organisation of his enormous war machine, the Kaiser stimulated German activity in the fields of learning of science, and in the systematisation of all human endeavour by the rigid enforcement of efficiency methods previously unknown.

While the Germans deny that their national spirit has been shaped by the philosophy of Nietzsche, much of the Kaiser's programme shows an almost startling trend in the direction of the development of a race of giants, who, ruled only by intellect and scorning sentiment, would come to be the masters of the world, one of the dreams of the future outlined by Nietzsche.

"Fatherland" a Rallying Cry.

The Emperor imbued the nation with the devotion to the Fatherland which has come to bear so striking a resemblance to the battle cry of the "Three Musketeers," who rallied to the slogan "One for All and All for One." Sacrifice of individual good for the good of the nation, self-abnegation of the highest type, and a patriotism unquestioning in the blindness of its enthusiasm were taught by the Emperor, and the people learned the lesson well.

For twenty-five years the Emperor kept his nation at peace. He celebrated the anniversary, and declared himself anew as an opponent of war. Yet immediately after that celebration he levied the greatest war tax ever laid upon a nation, raising a special fund estimated at £60,000,000. His personal share of this extraordinary draft upon the nation's resources was more than £1,600,000, and he paid it.

Crying "Peace," Building Ships.

Armament then proceeded at an astonishing pace; the naval programme was enlarged, and most unusual preparations were begun for the expansion of the country's arms.

All of this pointed to war, but Germany's tone in diplomatic exchanges continued to be pacific, almost conciliatory, and the Emperor denied that the rest of Europe had cause for alarm in the measures under way.

The fruit of the Emperor's efforts showed clearly, however, on the day the present war started. Without an hour's delay his troops were in Luxemburg on the way to France, and they were quickly followed by the legions storming at the gates of Liege. Germany was indeed ready.

Notwithstanding his twenty-five years' magnificent preparation for the day when his hosts would be led into battle, four months of actual war have broken down the great machine which he had brought into being by a quarter of a century of great endeavour.

How keen the disappointment of the Kaiser has been may be judged from the failure of all of his preconceived measures for the conduct of the war. He had believed, as did his General Staff, that Belgian resistance would be negligible; that the French would not be able to halt his troops on the march to Paris, and that his columns would enter the French capital within three weeks after the opening of hostilities.

Dreams of Conquest Gone.

All these dreams of conquest melted away before the magnificent courage of the Belgians and the equally magnificent effectiveness of the British and French Armies, which not only saved Paris, but succeeded in holding the German troops within an iron ring that has thwarted every attempt to win a decisive victory.

The plight of the Kaiser at this moment appears almost desperate. The Russians are at Cracow, the gateway to the German province of Silesia; they are at Gumbinnen, in East Prussia, and they are holding in check his counter offensive against Warsaw.

Also his forces in Belgium and France have lost the initiative before the great aggressive movement of the Allies, and are now definitely on the defensive.

The Kaiser has been indefatigable since the war started. He has gone from the eastern to the western front and back again; he has been on the firing line to encourage his troops, and he has spared no effort to organise victory. But he has seen his devoted soldiers sacrificed by hundreds of thousands without gaining a victory.

GERMANY'S LATEST SCHEME

FOR THE INVASION OF BRITAIN.

DREADNOUGHT AIRSHIPS FOR LONDON.

The Germans are seriously working on their scheme for invading London by a fleet of airships and aeroplanes.

According to the Chicago Tribune correspondent, the type of airship which is now being built is 400 yards long, 14 yards broad, with a crew of 30 officers and men. These "Dreadnought" Zeppelins are said to be meant for the invasion of London, which is, we are informed, to take place "early next year." Eighteen to twenty Zeppelins of the latest type are believed to be required for this invasion, and when the Tribune correspondent wrote on November 20 seven of these were understood to be ready.

The following is the article referred to:—

Germany is slowly but steadily preparing to make its threatened aerial attack on London and on the eastern coast of England, even without the aid of the German Navy, in the judgment of observers of the continued activity at the Zeppelin works at Friedrichshafen.

At this factory on Lake Constance over 1000 workmen since the beginning of the war have been employed in the construction of dirigible balloons, instead of a normal working force of 400 men. In place of the usual working period of eight hours a day the men, who are all experts, have been divided into day and night shifts of twelve hours each, so that over 500 are always engaged. All the finished materials and fittings, as well as sections of the airship envelopes arrive from other parts of Germany ready made, and the workmen at Friedrichshafen have only to put them together. This makes it possible to build a Zeppelin in three weeks.

A Giant Zeppelin.

The latest and strongest Zeppelin ever built sailed to the north on November 5, direct from the Friedrichshafen works without any previous trial trips. It is 400 yards long, considerably longer than its predecessors, about 14 yards broad, and its motive power consists of three motors of 800 horse-power. It carries a crew of thirty officers and men.

In a special basket this Zeppelin carried 50 torpedo bombs, each said to be capable of as much damage as the shells of the famous 16-in. guns. One of these bombs, during a trial near Friedrichshafen penetrated the earth five yards. All the Zeppelins built since the beginning of the war have been similarly armed.

"Dreadnought" Zeppelins were launched Aug. 15, Sept. 3 and 24, Oct. 15, and November 5, and two others of the same type at the beginning of August, making a total of seven. These formidable aerial vessels are said to be able to resist successfully any aeroplane attack. They can "sail" with a weight of two or three tons; they have 17 to 18 independent gas compartments, and water-planes that will allow them to land on water, if necessary, and continue their flight later. At Friedrichshafen they are called "marine airships," and in small letters on their hulls are painted the significant words, "Meant for London." Officially in Germany there have been built up to the present 31 Zeppelins, but only the most recent dozen count with the military authorities.

The German staff and Count Zeppelin are understood to hold the opinion that 18 to 20 Zeppelins of the latest type are necessary for a successful attack on London, and this number is expected to be ready early next year.

All the latest airships carry several machine guns on special platforms, and one large gun each.

DOES THE SPIRIT OF DRAKE

ANIMATE BRITISH NAVAL COMMANDER?

TRADITION ASSOCIATED WITH DRUM.

Will Drake's drum be beaten now for the third time?

In the great hall at Buckland Abbey in Devonshire, a few miles from Plymouth—the ancestral home of the family of Sir Francis Drake—there hangs an ancient drum of a pattern not known these hundred years.

It is the famous drum of the great English sea fighter, his companion throughout his whole adventurous career. It beat the signals on his flagship when he scattered the Spanish Armada; it went with him on the first British ship that went round the world, and it sounded the taps when, after his death at sea in the West Indies, his body was committed to the waters of the Atlantic Ocean.

When Danger Threatens.

When Drake lay dying, so runs the tradition, he commanded his brother, who was a captain of one of the ships in the British fleet, to take his drum back to England, and hang it in his hall at Buckland Abbey.

Whenever danger threatened Britain let them sound on that drum, and his spirit would enter into the British Admiral and scatter his country's foes as he had done in the days gone by. His brother did as he was commanded, and after three centuries the drum still hangs in Buckland Abbey, which is now in the possession of a descendant of Drake's brother.

When Drum Sounded.

Twice, runs the legend, has the drum been sounded—and not in vain; once, in the generation after Drake's death, when the Dutch sought to wrest the control of the seas from the British, and the doughty Admiral von Tromp sailed up the English Channel with a broom at his masthead, to signify that he would sweep the British from the ocean.

At its sound the spirit of Drake entered into Admiral Blake, who triumphed over the conquering Dutch. Again, when the genius of Napoleon threatened the very existence of the British Empire, the drum was sounded, and Drake's spirit animated the greatest of British sea-fighters, Admiral Nelson.

Will It Be Heard Again?

And now, when Britain is involved in the greatest war of her history, it is said that Drake's drum will again be sounded—to raise up, if the legend be true, the spirit of the old captain for the third time. The old tradition is the subject of a poem by Henry Newbolt. The poem makes the great sea-fighter, dying in his berth, exclaim—

"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's running low:
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port of heaven
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them long ago."

HOW YULETIDE WAS OBSERVED IN GERMANY.

LITTLE BOYS TAUGHT TO SALUTE OFFICERS.

London, Saturday Night.

Describing the Christmas festivities in Berlin, the correspondent of a Rotterdam paper says that an enormous business has been done in toy soldiers. One shop alone had a display of 30,000 tin soldiers in its windows.

Models of battles were another popular item. Practically all the toy soldiers were sold out, with the exception of those made up as Austrians.

Many parents, the correspondent says, had the less happy idea of dressing their children in full military uniform, and it was often a pitiful sight to see weak white-faced boys in soldier's uniforms, with their thin little legs falling over their clanking sabres. In this way, however, the military spirit of Germany is inoculated into the child mind, and they are taught to stand at attention and salute the officers whom they meet.

While the streets have been thronged the residents of Berlin realise that a good deal of the gaiety is only make-believe.

The prices of food reveal the effects of the war. Butter is extraordinarily dear, so, too, are tea, cocoa, and all kind of green vegetables.

The population has again been warned to be very careful in their use of meat, white bread, and potatoes. Fruit, sugar, and cheese are the only things seen in normal quantities.

The price of cattle has enormously increased, and a great many farmers are killing their milch cows because they cannot feed them.

Germany's boast that she "has plenty of food for her people is being thrown back at the authorities this yuletide.

ECHOES OF THE WAR.

A large number of women are choosing khaki dresses and costumes for Christmas.

SAILORS' GIFT FOR CHILDREN.—The crew of the cruiser Nottingham have sent a cheque to the Mayor of the city after which their ship is named to be expended in providing a Christmas dinner for the poor children.

The Chairman of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce declared at a meeting of that body that more money was now being paid in wages in the midland metropolis than at any previous period in its history.

More than £8000 was realised in the streets of Paris by the sale of penny miniature Belgian flags in aid of the Belgian Relief Fund. A sum of £2000 was realised in Marseilles, and the total throughout France is expected to reach about £20,000.

In token, perhaps, of contrition over the devastation of Belgium and the nameless horrors inflicted on her population, the archbishops and bishops of Germany have ordered Sunday, January 10, to be observed as a general day of prayer and repentance in the German Army.

A fund was recently started by the millers of the United Kingdom to provide the two British sections of two hospital trains for service in France and Belgium. Both trains have now been ordered at an estimated cost of £22,000, and are to be presented to the British Red Cross.

The Scottish kilted regiments are threatened with the substitution of khaki for their tartans. It will be some time, however, before the change can be brought about, for it will be some months yet before all the units of the new army can be supplied with their khaki uniforms.

Among the dumb heroes of the war Sergeant Young, of the Army Veterinary Corps, writing from Flanders, cites the case of a horse which came under his care in whose body were nineteen shrapnel bullets, while many other animals were suffering from gaping shell wounds and sword cuts.

THE SECRET OF THE BIG GUNS.—It is stated that only four persons not residents of Essen knew about the new mortar which the firm of Friedrich Krupp manufactured at its own expense and which later, because its shell rapidly smashed the strongest fortifications of reinforced concrete, the German military authorities promptly acquired.

SUFFRAGETTES AND THE WAR.—Mr William George, brother of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, presiding at the performance of a Welsh drama by Suffragettes at Llanstumdwy Institute, said the conduct of the Suffragettes during the war had done more to prove their qualifications for the vote than all their merry antics dramatised that night.

GERMAN PRISONERS' CHRISTMAS. — Twelve thousand Christmas parcels have already come through the post for the German prisoners of war, both military and civil, in this country. This season of the year is particularly dear to the heart of the German, and the relatives and friends of the prisoners are supplying them with the usual Christmas fare, as well as money to purchase extras.

DISTINGUISHED RESERVISTS.—Lord Tredegar and the Hon. William Hepburn Cozens Hardy, K.C., have been gazetted as Commanders in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. Lord Tredegar was formerly Lieutenant-Colonel of the Royal Monmouthshire Engineers and served in the Boer War. The Hon. W. H. Cozens Hardy is the heir to the Master of the Rolls, Lord Cozens Hardy.

LOYAL PAUPERS.—Twenty-six inmates of the Hammersmith Workhouse who are within the recruiting age limits made application for permission to enlist in the regular or irregular forces now in course of formation. They were examined by the medical officer of the Board of Guardians, but to their real regret and to the disappointment of their loyal aspirations, they were all rejected on the grounds of physical or mental unfitness.

GIVEN ENOUGH.—The headmaster of a school near Chatham was taking up a collection for the War Fund and incidentally asked at one class whether any boy had not given anything. One boy put up his hand. "Put your hand down, Tom," said the teacher of the class, and turning to the headmaster he added —"He has given enough; he has given his father's life." The father had been on board the Cressy, and was one of those lost.

It has been estimated roughly that underwriters have settled about £45,000 for losses on the East Coast caused by the German bombardment. Of this total about £25,000 was due to the Hartlepools, £15,000 to Scarborough, and £5000 to Whitby. This estimate is no criterion of the full extent of the damage done, for only a very small proportion of the total value of property in the districts shelled was insured against enemy risks.

Bishop Weldon announces that he does not agree with the Archbishop of York in thinking that the Kaiser is a good fellow. "The Kaiser," he says, "gave his answer to that when he shelled the coast of Yorkshire. I do not wish to destroy the German nation, I wish to destroy its power to do ill; and if you and I maintain that spirit, then we shall play our part not ignobly in such a crisis as neither we nor our fathers have hitherto known."

The midinettes, the "little milliners" of Paris, are busily engaged in dressing dolls for the American market. Each doll, from hat to shoes, represents the latest Paris style, and it is hoped that the new York "Four Hundred," when they see this dainty work, may be induced to send orders to Paris, and so enable the dressmakers to get to work again. The case of the midinettes is to be pleaded by Mr Myron T. Herrick, of the American Embassy.

ALLEGED ALIEN RECRUIT.—At Grantham Carl Bfaff, a German, twenty years of age, dressed in a British private's uniform, was remanded on a charge of being an alien enemy and failing to register himself He had enlisted in August in the Sixth Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment and had been training for three or four months at Belton Park camp, Grantham. Accused, who spoke perfect English, told the Magistrate that he had no friend to speak for him.

PATRIOTIC POSTMEN.—The postmen of the West Ealing sub-district and those of Hanwell have shown a fine spirit of unselfishness. Having regard to the exceptional circumstances of this Christmas, they have resolved to devote their Christmas boxes to the Post Office Relief Fund and to the Post Office Belgian Relief Fund. The men engaged at the Ealing Broadway Post Office have decided to pool all contributions in order to ensure a full share of benefit for each man who is now serving with the army or the navy.

PETERHEAD TRAGEDY.

LIFEBOAT CREW DASHED ON ROCKS.

Two Men Drowned, and Others Have Narrow Escapes.

Peterhead, Saturday.

The stormy coast at Peterhead, on the East Coast of Scotland, was the scene of a thrilling affair to-day, when two members of the lifeboat crew lost their lives.

The motor lifeboat, Alexander Tulloch, had gone to the rescue of an Admiralty trawler which had gone ashore owing to the heavy seas which are running near the south harbour. When close to the vessel, and manœuvring to take the crew off a heavy sea struck the lifeboat and washed the majority of her men overboard.

Dashed on the Rocks.

The mountainous waves dashed the men against the rocks, and mauled them terribly. Nine of the men were rescued alive, but in a very weak state, and one, James Geddes, jun., died shortly afterwards. The body of the tenth man, David Reid, has not been recovered.

Lieutenant Currie made a second attempt, and after a long struggle succeeded in reaching the rock.

When on the rock he was submerged several times while attempting to fasten a line to another line from the wrecked vessel, but all his attempts were in vain. The rope snapped, and he was washed back and bruised against the rocks. By this time the rocket apparatus had arrived and the lifeboat had been launched.

The lifeboat ran alongside the wreck, but was unable to take the crew on board, and while manœuvring to get alongside again was thrown on to the rocks and damaged.

The remainder of the lifeboat crew and all on board the wrecked vessel were saved.

All the members of the crew of the lifeboat were got from the water, and were brought round, except two—John Geddes, jun., and David Reid, both belonging to Peterhead.

RUSSIAN COMMENT ON COAST RAID.

Petrograd, Saturday.

The Novoye Vremye heads an article on the bombardment of Hartlepool, Scarborough, and Whitby, "A crime and miscalculation," and scathingly criticises the German press on the brilliant victory of their sailors, which the Germans apparently regard as a satisfactory set-off to the Falklands defeat.

After remarking that the slaughter of defenceless persons is an integral part of German warfare, the writer adds—"The British comments have not yet been received, but we are convinced that the only one response will be increasing volunteers. There is no question of intimidation but simply of sickening disgust and stern indignation. The same feelings are animating the Russians.

"The British sporting spirit revolts at these cowardly assaults on the weak."

The Vremye concludes by contrasting the Hartlepool incident with the British treatment of the Emden prisoners.

The Russcoe Slovo says a day of reckoning will come under the old seawold Callaghan.

German Miscalculations.

In the same line of ideas the Bourse Gazette comments on the German miscalculations regarding India and South Africa.

"The German General Staff," it says, "was blinded by the insensate conviction that it would easily finish with the Empire of shopkeepers, but just as man cannot live by bread alone no Empire can live by the sword alone."

The Kurier points out that the co-operation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Russia is one of the many proofs that enlightened Turks realise that religion is not involved, and that the war is between justice and freedom and despotism and barbarity.—Reuter.

MORE DEATHS AT HARTLEPOOL.

Hartlepool, Saturday.

As a result of the bombardment of Hartlepool three further deaths were announced to-day, the total now being 106.

5TH SCOTTISH RIFLES' LUCK.

Former Billet Blown to Pieces.

Glasgow, Saturday.

Private Harvey Maule, No. 6 Company, 5th Scottish Rifles, writing to his parents in Glasgow, tells of a narrow escape of the regiment, who had shifted their billets one night to see the houses blown to pieces the following evening by a "Jack Johnson."

All that happened was that an old woman was killed, and one was injured.

The regiment were due for a 48-hours' spell in the trenches, starting on the 19th, up to which date there had been no further casualties.

GERMAN SUBMARINE

IS CHASED IN NORTH SEA.

Ship Captain Seeks Safety in the Tay.

Dundee, Saturday.

A German submarine is believed to have been chased off the Scottish coast.

This news has come to hand by the captain of a ship which has reached the Tay. As he was crossing the North Sea he was warned by a British submarine to get out of the way as quickly as possible, as a German submarine had been sighted in the vicinity.

This warning was confirmed by the exciting chase of a German submarine by British war vessels. The ship captain then made for the Tay with all speed.

SCOTTISH DUKE ANXIOUS

ABOUT HIS MISSING SONS.

Deep Concern In Atholl.

Official intimation has been received by the Duke of Atholl that his youngest son, Captain Lord James Stewart Murray, Cameron Highlanders, was posted missing on 21st inst.

His Lordship, it will be recollected, was wounded at the battle of the Aisne on 11th September, on which date also the Duke of Atholl's second son, Major Lord George Stewart Murray, Black Watch, was reported missing, regarding whom no further information has been received. Lord James returned to Blair Castle to recuperate, only returning to the Continent some weeks ago.

It was known he had reached the firing line, but no particulars have been received of any engagement in which he was concerned. He was previously stationed at the Base Camp, and subsequently at an intermediate camp.

Much sympathy is felt in Atholl for the ducal family in the anxious circumstances. The Marquis of Tullibardine, the heir to the Dukedom, is, of course, with the Scottish Horse.

SERGEANT'S RIFLE GOES OFF.

ONE MAN KILLED AND ANOTHER WOUNDED.

Swansea, Saturday.

An unfortunate occurrence has taken place at Swansea, as a result of which one man was killed and another wounded.

While a sergeant of the local battalion was marching a party of men to the drill hall his rifle went off, with the result that the men were shot.

The sergeant immediately surrendered, and was detained pending a full inquiry by the military authorities.

The sergeant was brought up at Swansea Police Court this morning, and was formally remanded.

The wounded man is progressing favourably.

CALCUTTA RACING.

Winner of Viceroy's Cup.

Calcutta, Saturday.

The race for the Viceroy's Cup, which was ran here to-day, resulted as follows:—

Bachelor's Wedding,	1
Arthur B.,	2
Shining May,	3

The winner, which was favourite, only got the best of matters after a hard tussle, and the finish was a close one.

Seven ran.—Reuter.

FAGS FROM QUEEN MOTHER.

London, Saturday Night.

Queen Alexandra has sent every patient at the three military hospitals in the Weybridge district a box of cigarettes with her portrait thereon.

ROCKET THAT THROWS A GRAPPLING IRON.—One soldier from the front tells of an ingenious device they have for tearing down the German barbed wire entanglements. There are hundreds of miles of these barriers in front of the German trenches along the front, in France and Belgium. They bring the most impetuous bayonet charge to a standstill until a way is cut through them. Now the French are experimenting with an appliance similar to a rocket apparatus, which throws a grappling iron attached to a rope over the entanglement, which are then dragged down and hauled into our trenches.

STILL THEY COME.

Indian students passing through Paris on their way to join their regiments at the front. P.P.

DUNDEE PRISONERS IN AUSTRIA

WALK IN LOVELY GARDENS.

A Cheery Letter.

Dundee, Saturday.

The following extract from a letter received from one of the Dundee men interned in Austria gives some interesting news concerning the conditions of their imprisonment:—

"Grossau, by Raaks, 12th Nov. 1914.

"I have received your very welcome letter of 11th October, and am pleased to learn from it that all at home are well. You may have no anxiety about me, although I am under arrest. That under present circumstances is only natural.

"We are all very well off in our present quarters, and have beautiful grounds to walk in. The castle is the property of an Austrian Countess, and the gardens are beautifully laid out. We have nothing to do except to keep our rooms clean, and we feel the idleness more than anything.

"It gets very monotonous, and we all wish the war was over. The food we get is very good, so we have nothing to complain of."

MAJOR'S HORSE BOLTS DOWN HILL.

Officer Thrown to Ground and Injured.

Devonport, Saturday.

Major R. F. Lock, R.A., Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster-General for Plymouth Fortress, was thrown from his horse while out riding at Devonport this morning.

His horse ran away down a somewhat steep hill, and at the bottom crashed through a wooden fence at the side of the road.

Major Lock was unseated and thrown heavily to the ground, sustaining nasty injuries about the head, face, and legs.

BRITISH ENVOY

Arranges to See the Pope.

Rome, Saturday.

Sir Henry Howard, special British envoy to the Vatican, this morning visited Cardinal Gasparri, and requested him to arrange an audience with the Pope to have the opportunity of presenting his letters of credence.

BURGLAR'S COMPLETE KIT

Found On German Officer's Body.

Paris, Saturday.

On the body of a German lieutenant of the Fifty-Ninth Prussian Infantry killed in action near Ypres a complete burglar's kit, showing signs of hard usage, was found by the French Sanitary Squad.

Tools for unlocking doors, drilling holes in safes, &c., were contained in a rich leather case, and the instruments themselves were highly nickelled.

The case bore a card, showing that it was not sent surreptiously, but through official channels.

THE INTERNED BRITISHERS IN HOLLAND.

The interned British at Groningen celebrated Christmas just as if they were at home.

On Christmas Eve there was a carol service, and the following morning a parade, followed by a religious service.

At one o'clock the Christmas dinner was given, the dining-room and tables being dressed with holly, mistletoe, and many cards sent from England.

The turkeys and puddings also came from home. On the menu were put the following words:—"Interned but not interred; 'tis better so." After dinner there was a draw for presents, with no blanks. On Boxing Day (yesterday) a cafe concert was given in the course of the afternoon.

Next month the men will move to the new buildings which are being built.

MISSING MARINE FOUND.

Dover, Saturday.

The body of a soldier dressed in the uniform of a Royal Light Infantryman was found in the Dover docks to-day. He has been missing since November 26.

Mr Wilfred Ward quotes figures to show that 193 priests have been shot, injured, or made prisoners by the Germans in Belgium.

ONE OF THE OLD GUARD.

ABERDEEN OFFICER WHO SAW MUCH SERVICE.

Aberdeen, Saturday.

The death occurred at Aberdeen to-day of Colonel William Johnston, formerly of the Army Medical Department, who served in Transvaal in 1878.

Colonel Johnston, who took part in the Zulu War (1879), retired in 1892, but was recalled during the Boer War, and served as assistant director of the Army Medical Department at the War Office. He was seventy-one years of age.

PHILIPPINES RISING SQUASHED.

A POORLY ORGANISED AFFAIR.

Manila, Saturday.

Eight Filipinos have been arrested as a result of an attempted uprising in Manila and its environs last Thursday night.

The rising, which was poorly organised, and lacked leaders, proved wholly abortive. —Reuter.

"ME NO DONE FOR."

Brave German's Final Cry.

About the best description yet written of what a fight in the trenches is like has just been sent home by the well-known "Rover" forward, Lance-Corporal W. Dalby, of the Leicester Regiment. He writes:—

"The first shots are fired by the patrol, taken up by the sentries in the trenches, who shout 'Stand to, everybody,' and this wakens the men, who, to the number of about a thousand per regiment, man the trenches.

"Then the Maxim guns send between 600 and 700 shots per minute, the Field Artillery fire shrapnel rockets, and searchlights illuminate the sky for miles round, 'star-shells' set fire to haystacks, the Garrison Artillery set fire to the villages, and knock down houses and anything else that come in the way.

"The whizzing and whirring of shot and shell sounds as if every man had gone whistling mad. It is like this for an hour or two, then the German big guns stop firing. That is the signal for their infantry to charge. They come up in thousands, singing 'Wacht am Rhein,' and blowing penny trumpets, and making as much noise as possible.

"They get within a few yards of our trenches, but find our fire too hot for them. On one occasion all but one German turned and fled, and he came on shouting, 'Me no done for,' but he was a second later."

£1 PER HEAD DEMANDED

FROM UNMARRIED MEN IN BRUSSELS.

Paris, Saturday.

The Journal this morning states that proclamations issued by the German Governor of Brussels announcing a levy of a war indemnity of £20,000,000 on the city have been posted over with plain paper.

The report is current that the proclamation has been withdrawn owing to the action of Mr Bryan, Secretary of State, who through the United States Minister, Mr Brand Whitlock, made representations to the Governor that the levy constituted a violation of the Hague Convention.

It is, however, announced that the Governor in order to make up for the loss of the levy has decided to impose a tax of £1 a head on all unmarried persons over the age of twenty-seven.—P.A. War Special

GENERALS AT FOOTBALL.

A letter received in Dublin from the front says that a football match was played between the staffs of the First and Second Cavalry Divisions. Major-General Gough and Major-General Byng played on opposite sides. The result of the game is not stated, but a return match was arranged. A match in which two major-generals took part is probably unique in the records of football.

KAISER'S NAVY READY AT LAST.

Petrograd, Saturday.

It is persistently rumoured that the Germans have completed arrangements for naval operations in the North Sea and the Baltic.—P.A. War Special.

WITH OUR SOLDIERS AT THE FRONT.

STORIES OF BRAVERY IN THE FIGHTING LINE.

All the letters written home by men at the front dwell largely on two things—the mud and the grub.

A fine description of life in a subaltern's dug-out in the trenches is given by one lieutenant, who tells how the Indians "pass the weary winter eating jam, not only because it is pleasant and nutritious, but so that they can have a plentiful supply of jam-tin bombs."

In spite of the strict orders against men needlessly exposing themselves to the enemy's fire, some astonishing things are done.

"I watched a man yesterday," writes one officer, "walking slowly along the side of a communication trench right up to the line. He had a sack of coke, and was 'blowed' if he was going to stick in the mud with it. A hail of German bullets missed him, and he stopped to light his pipe behind an eighteen-inch willow even then before very deliberately getting down into the trench with his load."

It frequently happens that men get stuck in the treacly mud of the trenches, and have to be dug and derricked out.

HOW GERMAN OFFICER WAS CAPTURED.

Mixed up with stories of individual bravery are tales of the grimmest humour.

One of them in particular illustrates what our soldiers mean when they say that modern war has become "stupid."

A German officer was apparently doing a little reconnoitring on his own account, and, all unawares, advanced in the fog too far from his own trenches. Before he knew where he was he was right on top of the British trenches. The soil was wet and slippery, and he was over the edge and tobogganing down the side right into the midst of our men before he realised what had happened.

As he landed at the bottom he exclaimed in perfect English, just in time to prevent a bayonet thrust—"Well, of all the—wars!" His very forcible comment possibly saved his life. Our men recognised that no attack was intended, and, laughing, made the German a prisoner.

HIGHLANDERS' NEW NAME.

Lance-Corporal A. Sutherland, 2d Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, writes:—"We are in trenches about 700 yards from the Germans. We have had snow and frost here, but we are pretty used to it by now. We have had no casualties lately; our last were a fortnight ago, when we lost men in a night charge. The Germans call us 'the ladies from hell' (a nice name!). We are prepared to be here the whole winter, if necessary. Don't mind so long as we keep jogging along, but 'coal-boxes' make you feel creepy when they land near you. It's goodbye if they hit you."

BRAVE MACHINE-GUNNER.

Private F. Clarke, 2d Battalion Coldstream Guards, writes:—"It was here (at Landrecies) that one man of the machine gun section worked both guns alone on a bridge; when one got too hot he went to the other, and so on. All went well with him until the action had almost finished, when four Germans came up dressed in French uniform and shook hands with him. Just then the officer and the French interpreter came up, and the latter at once shouted—'They are Allemands!' Before they had time to wink an eye one of the German had run a bayonet through the back of the machine gunner and twisted it in him. I will leave you to guess what became of these four. They did not escape, and they are not prisoners of war."

THE SOLDIER AT HIS BEST.

Regimental Sergeant-Major Shakespeare, with the North Somerset Yeomanry, says:—"Here you see Tommy, happy-go-lucky, breezy Tommy, in his real war paint—mud, but he doesn't mind; it's all the same to him whether he's giving his rations to a company of desolate, lovable, homeless Flemish women, or whether he is running to a hole where a shell has just burst in search of a souvenir. Tommy is at his best when he is at war. Here you can see him wagering five-franc notes that the next shell does not burst within a certain radius, or signalling a miss when a German sniper has just missed his head by a fraction of an inch. People at home do not know Tommy; but he is made of the same stuff as his forefathers."

THAT "JACK JOHNSON."

Lance-Sergeant E. T. Andrews, 2d Grenadier Guards, writes from the front:—"I was in a trench when a 'Jack Johnson' shook hands with me. It caught me just above the left ear, and I had five wounds on the left elbow. . . . I also had two on my chest, seven down my right shin, and one on my left ankle. I had any amount of smaller ones all over my face and hands and right arm. In fact, I was getting little pieces out for days afterwards. The 'Jack Johnson' knocked me out senseless for a fortnight, and unconscious for about six days."

DESPATCH RIDER UNDER FIRE.

Corporal E. Titchmarsh, a despatch rider of the Royal Engineers, says:—

I have been on the Ypres and Armentieres line, and have had several narrow escapes. One night one of our despatch riders got lost, and I was sent out to find him. It was a dark night, and I was riding without a light, as there were Germans in the neighbourhood.

As I rode along a British sentry challenged me, but I did not hear him, owing to the noise of my motor cycle, and passed on.

Suddenly rifle shots rang out behind me, and bullets whizzed past my ears, quite close enough to be comfortable.

I thought the Germans had got me, and dropped off my machine as quickly as I could and had myself in the nearest ditch, and, with revolver in hand, I waited, determined, if possible, to give a good account of myself.

The sentry knew I was off my machine, and thinking he had captured a German, he challenged again. Hearing the challenge was in English, I answered and came out of the ditch, but the sentry was still very uncertain as to my identity. I showed him my pass, and we then had a cigarette together and I went on my way.

The Spy Danger.

The whole country seems overrun with spies. I have a lot of despatch riding at night, and frequently see lights signalled from buildings and houses. We caught one German dressed as a Frenchman cutting the telegraph wires at night and found a German rifle and ammunition in the house where he stayed. Three days later, at seven o'clock in the morning, I heard a volley fired, and I knew what it meant.

The day as I rode into a village all the people ran away from me, thinking I was a German. When I called to them in French that I was English, they were overjoyed, surrounded me, and could not do enough for me. On one occasion the whole of our division was marching towards a bridge over a river, and as we approached, we saw a dog tied to the bridge.

The dog started barking, and immediately the Germans opened fire at us from entrenched positions on the other side of the river. We at once opened out, fell flat, and returned the fire, and we lost very few, considering the position we were in.

SHOULD JAPAN BE ALLOWED

TO ANNEX GERMAN EAST AFRICA

AS OUTLET FOR SURPLUS POPULATION?

A very interesting question is raised by Dr P. Lyttelton Gell, the famous Oxford don, who suggests that the Japanese should annex German East Africa with our co-operation and support.

Japan, it is widely recognised, must have an outlet for her surplus population, but the great danger in the way is the labour antagonism created by the competition of Asiatic workmen with Europeans who have to make their living in new lands that have been built up by their work.

Already Japanese immigrants have been regarded with jealousy and suspicion in Hawaii, on the Pacific Slope of the United States, in British Columbia, and in Australia.

When Japan proposed to establish a colony on the West Coast of Mexico, where there is ample room for them, the United States Government took alarm and scented militarist designs under the colonising banner.

China and India are both over-populated now, and Korea and Formosa, which constitute Japan's present possessions, are not large enough.

Larger Than Japan.

Mr Lyttelton Gell's theory is that German East Africa is admirably suited for Japanese settlement on a very large scale. Its area is 384,000 square miles, a dominion larger than Japan.

Its soil is in many districts exceedingly fertile. Much of it is parklike in character, well watered, and rich in stock of every description.

Rice is grown extensively in the valleys, and nearer the coast cocoanuts and bananas have been largely produced.

The river banks are lined with dense forest, in which useful timber occurs, and there are plantations of rubber, sisal, cotton millet, and maize, according to variations of climate.

A railway has been constructed, and large sums spent by the Germans on developing the territory.

It borders in the west on three great lakes, Victoria, Tanganyika, and Nyassa. This gives it the advantage of a second coast-line in the interior.

The colony exports ivory, rubber, copra, mats, cotton, hemp, timber, skins, hides, and coffee, the value in 1907 being £625,000.

The Native Population.

There are 8,000,000 natives, but there is ample room for them and for Japanese colonists.

The arrival of the latter would complicate no white labour problem, and it could not offend the susceptibilities of either the United States or the British self-governing Colonies.

Great Britain has enough territory in Africa to digest for a considerable period, and neither France nor Russia has any desire for East African colonies.

The habits of industry and frugality which the Japanese possess would make them ideal settlers, and they would undoubtedly introduce higher standards of efficiency into Central African agriculture, and thus increase its trade.

If Japanese attempt to establish colonies under the flags of Christian nations, they are subject to suspicion on the part of the Government, and to violence on the part of the populace. It is necessary, therefore, that they should find a colony under their own flag.

It is inconvenient to us that its venue should be sought in Australasia, and German East Africa appears to provide an ideal location. Mr Gell's suggestion merits wide and sympathetic discussion.

In "recognition of his courageous struggle for truth," the Faculty of Law at Breslau has conferred the honorary degree of Doctor on Dr Sven Hedin. It is sad to think that Dr Sven Hedin was so badly worsted in his struggle.

HOW CONVICTS GET NEWS OF THE WAR.

LIMELIGHT LECTURES FORM

NEW ATTRACTION OF PRISON.

What do the convicts in our prisons know about the war?

Are they kept in ignorance—for the rule about the circulation of news in prisons is very strict—or are they allowed to learn something of the vital happenings in Europe to-day?

It has been suggested that the rule about news should be reformed at the present time to allow prisoners—many of whom must have friends and relatives at the war—to know how the tide of battle flows. Others—for crime does not kill patriotism—will desire to know how the Allies are progressing, and it has been said that to keep convicts in ignorance is adding unfairly to their punishment.

The benevolent section of the public need have no fears about convicts and war news. It is learned from the Prison Commissioners that the war has brought yet another pleasure into prison life.

"Convicts are kept well informed of happenings in the war area," said the Commissioner.

"Every week the prisoners gather, and a lecture is delivered by the governor on the week's happenings. It is carefully prepared, with the object of making everything plain to the audience: of bringing out the salient features of the week's battles. In this way the convict is kept au courant with the war news.

"Limelight lectures, in which great interest is taken, are given once a quarter. Those people who have cried out on the hard lot of the convict kept in dark ignorance have rushed into print knowing nothing of their subject."

IF GERMANY WINS THE WAR

SHE WILL CREATE NEW LAW FOR EUROPE.

Herr Maximilian Harden, one of the most famous of German journalists, is quite frank as to why Germany went to war.

In a New York paper he says:—To be "unassailable"—that must never become the wish of a German. And for the securing of more comfortable frontier protection only a madman would risk the life that is flourishing in power and wealth.

Now we know what the war is for—Not for French, Polish, Ruthenian, Esthonian, Lettish territories, nor for billions of money; not in order to drive bleeding after the war into the pool of emotions and then allow the chilled body to rust in the twilight dusk of the Deliverer of Races. No! To hoist the storm flag of the empire on the narrow channel that opens and locks the road into the ocean.

And Herr Harden is exceedingly scornful of those diplomatists and writers who try to excuse Germany's action on the ground that she went to war in self-defence. To such people—Chancellor von Bethmann Hollweg, for instance—he says! Not as weak-willed blunderers have we undertaken the fearful risk of this war. We wanted it. Because we had to wish it and would wish it. May the Teuton Devil throttle those whiners whose pleas for excuses make us ludicrous in these hours of lofty experience.

We do not stand, and shall not place ourselves, before the Court of Europe. Our power shall create new law in Europe. Germany strikes. If it conquers new realms for its genius, the wretchedness of all the gods will sing songs of praise to the good war.

ITALY LOOKS UPON THE WAR

AS PRELUDE TO SERIES.

STRUGGLE FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN.

"If the Germans do not score a decisive victory over the Russian forces by Christmas, then the Eastern campaign must be looked upon as ended, because it is impossible to suppose that Germany will be able to muster a sufficiently strong force of reserves to stop the enormous flood of the Russian troops that threaten her Eastern provinces.

"As to the struggle in the West, although it looked at the beginning of the war that the fate of Europe hinged upon its issue, it has lost at present this character. True, it is within possibility that the French may be defeated, but, first, they are fighting on their own soil, they are defending their country, and the Germans are as far as ever from victory; and, secondly, should they be defeated, it must be remembered that the Germans will have to meet a British Army of a million and a half men, and the German troops, exhausted by the desperate fighting, will hardly prove equal to a new struggle with what are Europe's best soldiers."

This is the opinion of an Italian gentleman, whose close relations to the Italian War Office make him practically the mouthpiece of the Italian military authorities.

A Series of Wars.

"It is my belief that the war in the North will not continue for very long," he says, "but this war will be only a prelude to a whole series of wars that will flare up like a flame from beneath cinders. These wars may continue for years, and they certainly will reach the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

"In this you may find the explanation for Italy's slowness, for Italy would like to postpone these dictates of history until the last possible moment; at least, until the moment when she will be fully prepared for a war, and this is not far off.

"Russia was also postponing her action, although she knew five years ago that war was inevitable, and although she was forced to accept insult upon insult.

"The Adriatic question is much more complicated than think the politicians who would entrust Italy's future into the hands of the victors, with whom Italians are to associate themselves, according to their advice.

"The Germans will not give up the Mediterranean as easily as that. For many centuries the Mediterranean has attracted them. They cannot break Great Britain's power on the ocean, and the free right to use the old sea route through the Mediterranean, that connects three continents, is for them a question of life and death.

"They will desperately defend their Adriatic possessions, and consequently Italy will have to face a new and determined foe. In the coming struggle we expect aid only from Great Britain, for to Russia the Mediterranean is a matter of secondary importance, while France, tired out with her struggle with Germany, will need her forces for another purpose than to help her future competitor on the sea."

SOLDIERS THREE!

That soldiers have an International language of their own was proved a few days ago by an incident in the Rue de la Paix, Paris.

A well-known Edinburgh man was walking down the street to his hotel when he saw a couple of immense Turcos—both of them over 6 ft. high—and between them a "bantam" Highlander, coming towards him.

"Hullo, Killie," he shouted. "Where have you come from?"

"We were a' in the trenches thegither," he said. "We were a' wounded in the same engagement, and we've just come oot o' the same hospital. We're goin' back to the front in a few days."

"But do you understand what they say?" asked the man from Edinburgh. "Not me," was the reply, "an' they canna tell a word I say. But we're getting on like a house on fire. We havena separated for two days. Come on, dashies!" And the grinning Turcos, linking arms with the kilties, strode away.

SECRET WILL OF PETER THE GREAT

IS THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF RUSSIAN POLICY.

Russia's proclamation of the annexation of Galicia serves to recall a most remarkable historical document—the secret will of Peter the Great—which, it is said, is read to every Czar of Russia on his ascension to the throne.

In that will Peter laid out an amazing programme for future Czars to follow, which had as its consummation the commercial or political subjugation of the entire world.

Nearly two centuries have passed since Peter died. The proportion of his prophecies that have come true is startling. Poland has disappeared; Sweden has been humbled and isolated; the Turk has been driven from the Black Sea; and a vast line of Russian advance has spread over Northern Asia to the Pacific Ocean.

The guiding hands of the dead Czar may be seen as clearly in the present war as at any time in the past. Britain must be made a commercial ally, Peter counselled his successors. All Slavonic peoples must be moulded into one nation, Constantinople should be taken, and the ascendancy over the Teuton race gained by fair means or foul.

Three far-reaching objectives, and all of them possible as an outcome of the titanic war now in progress. It seems almost that Russia has no other policy than a determination to make Peter's prophecies come true.

German Princesses.

"Russian Princes should be encouraged to take German Princesses to wife. Thus we will draw their best blood into our nation and absorb the benefits of their civilisation."

Peter wrote the foregoing some time previous to his death in 1725. Whether or not the Princes of Russia have been influenced by his advice, it remains a surprising fact that the wives of the higher Russian nobility, whenever from another nation, are most generally Germans.

The present Czar is the son of a Danish Princess, who was half German. His wife was a Princess of the German State of Hesse. Grand Duke Cyril married Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg, and Grand Duke Paul married a German woman of lesser rank, Countess von Hohenfelsen.

Austria a Pawn.

Austria was to be considered only a pawn among nations, according to Peter. He advised the Czars who followed him to coax and coddle the dual monarchy as long as it could be of service, and to strike when it stood in the way. Or better yet, he urged, involve it in wars with France, Germany, or Italy, and let it wear its strength down without damage to Russia. He said:—

"We must make the house of Austria interested in the expulsion of the Turk from Europe, and we must neutralise its jealousy at the capture of Constantinople either by preoccupying it with a war with other European States or by allowing it a share of the spoil, which we can afterwards resume at our leisure."

What could be more prophetic? Russia's advance along the Black Sea was marked by the acquisition of Galicia, Bukowina, Bosnia, and Novibazar by Austria. It has already lost the latter to Servia, the two former will become Russian territory if the Allies win the present war, and Servian arms are now invading Bosnia. Russia, it would seem, is resuming at its leisure.

Control of Constantinople.

No effort should be spared to gain control of Constantinople, Peter urged. Russia has spared none. Had it not been for the united resistance of the Powers of Europe in the Crimean War it would be Czargrad instead of Constantinople now. He wrote:—

"We must progress as much as possible in the direction of Constantinople and India. He who can once get possession of those points is the real ruler of the world. With that view we must provoke constant quarrels with Turkey and at another time with Persia. Moreover, we must take pains to establish and maintain an intimate union with Austria, apparently countenancing its schemes for future aggrandisement, and all the while secretly rousing the jealousy of the minor States against it. In this way we must bring it to pass that one or the other party shall seek aid from Russia, and thus we shall exercise a sort of a protectorate over the country, which will pave the way for future supremacy."

The War of Nine Nations.

Servia and Montenegro were provoked to war, and appealed to Russia for aid. That furnished the spark which kindled the war of nine nations. Poland once turned to Russia as the Balkan States. No historian could trace the course of Balkan diplomacy better than this dead Czar did two centuries ago.

Russia has followed Peter's advice to make Britain a commercial ally. In addition France has been drawn in, and the Triple Entente formed, which has developed into a military as well as a commercial bond.

Peter's plan for the final struggle for world supremacy was as concise as his others. He advocated the making of secret and separate overtures to Vienna and Paris, to share the domination of the world. Both would respond, he believed. Then the two would be involved in a death struggle, which would eliminate one from the field. Russia would calmly pick the bones of the other.

Peter did not see the future rise of the present Germany; but in a measure he predicted it. "The North will always win over the South," he said. Austria, to Peter, was the head of the Teuton peoples, and all his advice concerning the handling of Vienna would apply as well to Berlin.

Ordained By Providence.

He believed that the future greatness of the Russian race was ordained by fate. Not westward, but northward, the star of Empire would wend its way according to his plans. Egypt, Chaldea, Babylon, Greece, Rome, France, Britain; why not Russia next? Kismet, Russia, would be next.

"I look on the future invasion of the Eastern and Western countries by the North as a periodical movement, ordained by Providence, who in like manner regenerated the Roman Nation by barbarian invasion. These emigrations of men from the North are as the reflux of the Nile, which at certain seasons comes to fertilise the impoverished lands of Egypt by its deposits. I found Russia as a rivulet. I leave it as a river. My successors will make it a large sea, destined to fertilise the impoverished lands of Europe, and its waters will overflow in spite of opposing dams erected by weak hands, if our descendants only know how to direct its course. This is the reason I leave them these instructions. I give these countries to their watchfulness and care, as Moses gave the Tables of Law to the Jewish people."

RUSSIA'S IMMENSE AEROPLANES.

A good deal has been heard concerning the British and German aeroplanes, but the great Sikorsky biplanes used by the troops of the Czar have been rather overlooked.

These machines, invented by a Russian engineer named Sikorsky, are by far the biggest aeroplanes in the world. They stand sixteen feet high, and are about 100 feet wide.

The Sikorsky can carry almost as many passengers as an airship, and has a large passenger cabin, which is constructed of metal and contains numerous windows.

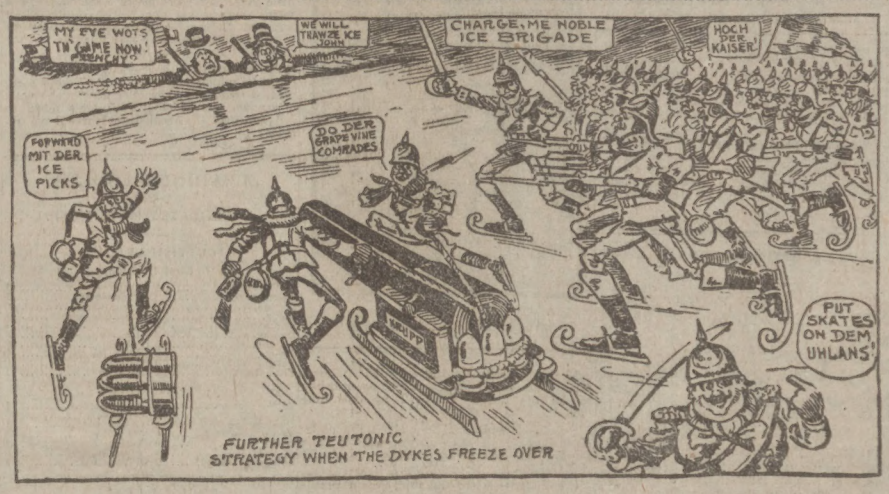
In this machine three engines are fitted, which give a total of nearly 1000 horse-power, for, owing to the one and a half tons, and having so large a crew to carry, it demands high power to pull it off the ground and keep it in the air.

The weight of the machine has necessitated an elaborate landing-chassis, composed of numerous springs and pneumatic tubes, so that the huge biplane can alight safely on rough ground at a speed of sixty miles an hour.

War and its Phases
In Up-to-date Cartoon.

FISHING ON THE BANK OF THE VISTULA

Grand Duke Nicholas—Such sport! Every time I try this bait they bite.


MY EYE WOT'S TH' GAME NOW! FRENCH?
WE WILL TRAWZE ICE JOHN
CHARGE, ME NOBLE ICE BRIGADE
HOCH DEE KAISER!
FORWERD MIT DER ICE PICKS
DO DER GRAPE VINE COMRADES
PUT SKATES ON DEM UHLANS!
FURTHER TEUTONIC STRATEGY WHEN THE DYKES FREEZE OVER

TRYING TO BUTT IT DOWN

Montreal Daily Star.

The Sphinx—Silly ass! That's been tried so often before.

"THERE GOES WILLIE!"

New York Evening Telegram.

THE PRUSSIAN BOOT.

After setting out to crush the world the Prussian Boot is sadly in need of repair. Le Barbare, Paris.

DOWN AND OUT

Commercial Germany: Himmel! Just look wot you brought me to! (The number of failures throughout Germany are increasing at a tremendous rate daily.) —Cable news.

WELCOME, LITTLE STRANGER?

HEARTS AND CELTS GOING STRONG.

RANGERS FAIL TO BREAK THIRD'S HOME RECORD.

CRISP CRITICISM OF LEADING GAMES AND PLAYERS.

Hearts had an easy win over Raith Rovers at Tynecastle.

There were 10,000 onlookers. The issue was never in doubt. The home team opened the scoring with ten minutes gone. Gracie had the credit. The goal was of the peculiar order. Pretty play by Scott and Nellies led up to the centre coming into possession. He wheeled and got a chance. His drive was full of power. The ball glanced off Lavery's head, hit the inside of the far upright, and then bounced into the net.

Raith played an uphill battle throughout—played it with great pluck. But it was obvious that they were scarcely in the same class as their opponents. Now and again the Fife forwards managed to break away, but the calls upon Boyd were not numerous. At the other end the Hearts put in many hefty attacks, but it was not until half an hour had gone that the second goal was registered. It, too, came as the result of sterling outfield football. Wilson got hold, and literally danced his way along the left. His cross was a perfect gem, and with the Raith defence in a welter Wattie was given a clear road. He simply walked the ball into the net.

The Rovers battled bravely against a brainier side—a side as lusty as it was brainy. Scot, the inside left of Raith, was accidently knocked out by Crossan. He was carried from the field, looking as if he were badly damaged, but Trainer Barr had him fit in five minutes. About the same time Bill Morrison got a nasty coup when trying to head away a deadly centre by Low. He, too, was taken from the field, but also made a quick recovery.

ROVERS' CHIEF WEAKNESS.

Hearts were soon on the job in the second half, Wattie adding a third goal after clever wing to wing play. After this reverse Raith bucked up a bit, and more than once had decuedly hard lines, but Hearts were never really in great difficulty, and when a fourth goal was added it was all up bar the shouting. The score, 4-0, scarcely represents the full measure of Heart's supremacy. One man in the Rovers' side who stood out above his mates was Neish. To him Raith owe the fact that the score put up against them was not bigger. He made many splendid saves, and added to his already fine reputation as a goalkeeper.

Rovers were specially weak in attack. The right wing was ahead of the left, but the line as a line was of rather tame quality. Hearts' strong intermediate division—Briggs, Scott, and Nellies—broke it into comparative helplessness. Gibson was under a cloud. Welsh was blanketted in the centre. Rattray did some smart work, and Gourlay was the best inside right Raith have tried this season. Nor did the Fife halves check the career of the skilful Hearts' forwards, everyone of whom shone, but some of whom were not very successful in the shooting department. Thomson, who deputised for Porter, lacked experience, and Gracie toyed with him at times. Anderson was the pick of the three, but he, too, had a rough time against Low and Wattie. Lavery was poor at back. Low beat him time and again with ease. Morrison played up to his reputation. The amount of work he did was prodigious.

Hearts were a brilliant side, with not a weakling. Crossan was the best back on the field. His punting was tremendous. The halves were a level lot. Low was the star turn in a van which sparkled and flashed all the time. Gracie has made wonderful advancement since he returned from the south.

QUINN MISSES EASY CHANCES.

Celtic Park was in the pink of condition. The Celts had out their redoubtable side. The Hamilton lads were handicapped as M'Namee, their crack pivot, had to stand down owing to injury. Gifford filled the vacancy, but was not a success.

The Celts were the aggressors right away, and made rings round the Hamilton defence, but Watson kept the Celts from scoring. The Accies' goalie was the man of the moment. Even the wily Gallagher could not trick him into giving a goal away.

Quinn had some easy chances, but could not bring himself up to the scratch. He is not the centre he was a season or two ago, otherwise there would have been goals galore in the opening period. M'Atee was in splendid fettle, and crossed some beauties, but the nippy defence of Miller and Robertson broke up any likely attempts to score. Browning, well fed by M'Menemy, couldn't finish as usual. He seemed a bit off. The Accies' defence stood a great test, and their front rank did try to get set, but were up against a solid and ponderous defence, which absolutely refused to be beaten.

Kyle was great, and gave any amount of trouble, but was not well supported, although Husband put in some fine crosses. Hanlin, however, had the best sporting chances, giving Dodds the clean heel many times. Shaw had his little to do, and did it well. For a trier Gallacher must get his due. He risked everything, and was well rewarded with his two goals. His first was a very good one, as he got the ball well out, and, beating his man on the run, swerved in to beat Watson with a class shot.

"ACCIES'" GAME FIGHT.

Quinn, not to be done out, almost did the same thing a minute later, but had not so far to travel; in fact, he was stretched full length when he made his final effort. The "Accies" made strenuous attempts in the second period to score, but it was not until Gallagher had got his second goal through Quinn's fine effort that Stewart broke away on his own. He beat Johnstone and Dodds, enticed Shaw out of his goal, placed the ball in the net, and was secured a fitting reward for plucky play against Celts' defence. Celtic were certainly predominant all the time, but the "Accies" put up a game fight. The winners' best were—Gallagher, M'Atee, Johnstone, and Shaw. For Hamilton, Watson was splendid. Millar and Robertson were good, with Kyle and Hanlon the best of the forwards.

ANOTHER CLOUT TO CLYDE.

Dumbarton deserved their win at Boghead. The attendance was far below the average. Play was fast, and the exchanges were brisk. Clyde began healthily, but the Sons made a quick recovery, and Thom drew blood inside ten minutes. Clyde retaliated gamely, and the pace was a hot one. Both goals were repeatedly assailed, and while the football was not of a very lofty order, yet the play was exciting and interesting. Cranston endangered the home goal, but Allan failed to grasp a decent chance. After this the Sons did most of the attacking, but the Clyde defence was very stubborn. M'Turk held his charge well. He dealt with any number of stinging shots. M'Gregor, Gettins, and M'Fie being particularly attentive. The homesters held on to their lead till the interval.

The Reds were more in the attacking limelight after changing ends, but the homesters got quite as much of it. Corners fell to each side. The exchanges were very equal, with both goalkeepers showing good form. Gradually, however, Clyde filled the eye, and Allan, Thomson, Cranston, and others had tries at Hamilton Then came the equaliser by Barr, with the end in sight. There followed a ding-dong struggle for the lead, and the Sons got it by the skin of their teeth. They were the better team. At one point, however, they looked like breaking down, but in the end made a wonderful recovery, which gave them both points.

DIVIDE AT CATHKIN.

It was a bright, breezy game at Cathkin, where the referee's whistle played an important part by reason of the number of infringements and offside decisions. There was consternation in the Cathkin camp when J. B. failed to turn out, and Wharrier was asked to show his paces. Lock and Logan were nonstarters for the Rangers, and Hempsey and Joe Hendry filled the breach.

Up against the elements first half, the Thirds were all out of it, and Rangers drew first blood. Slackness in defence was the contributing factor which allowed Reid to slip the ball past Wharrier. Gordon it was who supplied the opening, and covered as the centre was he had all the credit for the 'cute move that led to the score.

The Cathkin front rankers were seldom dangerous, but a left wing cross found "Snider" Smith in possession, and a left foot hook found Hempsey well beaten. Rangers should have improved their figures before the whistle went, but didn't, and one all was the score at the interval.

The second half brought no goals, but most of the time Rangers were the aggressors, but the "Sojers'" defence was out to maintain a first half year unbroken home League record, and this they succeeded in doing. Thirds as raiders were not without their opportunities, and with a line of forwards that knew their business they ought to have had the winning goal. The credit of the draw goes to the Cathkin defence. Lennon, Orr, and Wharrier did wonders for their side. Time and again we saw Reid get picture passes 'twixt the backs, and make tracks for goal. Twice he drove past by the narrowest of margins. Others were nipped up by Lennon or Orr, who allowed no liberties.

Thomson, the Cumnock recruit, got the opportunity of his life to establish himself as the saviour of the points. Late in the picture a pass from Reid, unmarked, but the best he could do was to send past the upright.

ABOUT THE PLAYERS.

When you praise the defence—well, you have covered the team. Wharrier did as well as Brownlie could possibly have done, so what more do you want? Lennon was the best back on the field, with Orr following up. Hannah was a forcer all the time, never standing on ceremony; Swift, a spoiler, but he is not a shot; and Walker excelled in placing. The forwards never struck a paying game, Yates being far and away the best of the line. The place changing policy at Cathkin will never pay. J. W. Smith is essentially an inside left, while White was never in his place to back up Mountford on the left. Therefore "Happy Harry" never came off.

For Rangers Hempsey did well. He had no chance with the shot which beat him. Craig was the better back, though Muir was steady throughout. Joe Hendry was good at half, and so was Purcell, but honours go to Gordon. Bowie and Paterson formed the best wing on the field. It took more than one man to watch Reid, but he didn't take all his scoring chances. Cairns was unsuited by the heavy going, and he failed to get through, though he never neglected his partner. Thomson has yet to earn his spurs, and gives promise of blossoming out as Cairns has done, but the best seen at Parkhead for years."

Don't you think that Pat Reilly was disappointed with the result at Lochgelly. There was always the journey home to cheer him up.

No fewer than twenty-eight members of John Neilson's F.P.'s have joined the colours since the outbreak of the war. Is this a record? All of them are Sons of Neil.

Neil Harris secured the coveted "hat trick" against Queen's Park at Firhill. That little scrap with J. Kerr was the only fly in the ointment.

Dundee are not "dying" for a centre forward. Yet they could do with a smart 'un. Martin, of Dundee Hibs, is, of course, on their books.

Dick Riley played a great game for Third Lanark against Dundee on Christmas Day. He told me afterwards that he couldn't help doing it.

Up Aberdeen way they are wondering what is likely to happen. When I was stationed north they were always on the side of the undertaker. They are always down.

Anyone seeing the result of the 'Spurs-Sheffield Wednesday match might have been pardoned for thinking Davie M'Lean had been operating against the "Blades." 'Twas a famous victory.

It was no wonder that Dundee played Balfour in goal. Masterton didn't do at all well, but what do you make of our Brechin friend? I can't say, but probably he, too, had hard lines.

There were some players who took part in yesterday's matches in England who were not in bed all night. The source of my information is censored. Hard lines!

Lots of people are wondering if the members of the S.F.A. are in need of a tonic. If I don't get the Iron Cross for this, I'll think seriously about resigning.

Jimmy Gordon did more than any other to "gore" the Warriors down, but there was a "cordon" at Cathkin which took some breaking through.

If I really must prophesy, I will tell you this, that a sensation in English football will be sprung upon you which you can always tell your children's children I knew nothing of.

I would suggest to our good friend Johnny Richardson that he should ask Trainer Barr to train them in the art of climbing ladders, especially League ladders.

Charlie Roberts must be smiling to himself this weather. While "his" team is at the top of the table, there is another in whose welfare he used to be interested in. They are well down.

The result of the match against Kilmarnock brought it home forcibly to those who did not think Killie could get there. What a team it would have been had it been "interned." War Office language. It's all right, they tell me.

POINTS ABOUT THE PLAY IN ALL THE LEAGUE GAMES,

FORWARDS FIND THEIR SHOOTING BOOTS AND GOAL REGISTERS GET A LIFT.

A TIP FOR THE POWDERHALL HANDICAP.

Ayr are there this week-end.

Hendren! He never does. Dundee people say, at least, he is "never ahint."

Fred Martin lost the train at Kirkcaldy, and Jimmy Scott took his place.

"Killie" did some damage yesterday. (Passed by the Censor.)

Lots of people at Tynecastle were calling "nap." They only got four.

Gettins, of Dumbarton, says their boys are still "gettin" on. So I see.

A correspondent writes me to say that good goalkeepers are plentiful in Scotland. I can't help it.

Looking to next season, they say "Lock" is worth "keeping." I must get the Key to the situation.

I cannot understand Falkirk. They flatter only to deceive. What have the ministers to say about it?

Raith Rovers are wishing that they were in the East of Scotland competition. They are "Barr"red, of course.

Do you really think Hearts can be prevented from winning the championship? I only ask a question.

Aberdeen got home all right just a minute or two past time. They were a little more "Westernised" before they left.

A friend writes me—a Christmas card, I suppose—"does not one good card deserve another?" I'll have to pass it on.

By the way, you may safely go on Cowan, of Leven, for the Powderhall. He is expected by his friends to do the deed.

That result at Tynecastle is prophesied not to "Barr" the way to progress. Ye'll maybe be a lang time in seein' it. Ask the trainer.

What a great number of people were asking me last night was "What was the 'draw' at Cathkin?" No answer.

Aberdeen, according to a reporter who has his heart in Motherwell, should have been defeated. Give him his way.

A note from the man in the press-box at Celtic Park—"J. M. Dickson's refereeing was the best seen at Parkhead for years."

Swindon Town are still Reading that result! It was certainly a surprise.

Manchester City sat on Chelsea yesterday. It was a game of "Hyde" and seek.

Wait for a Scottish football sensation. I am sorry you have got to wait for it.

The chief feature at Celtic Park! Half a dozen gilt-edged chances missed by Quinn.

Derby County are on the top of the table. They were always great climbers.

There are a lot of people in Cupar who are proud of Proudfoot (late of Chelsea). Put your best one forward, 'sergeant!

Notts Counted a good deal when they met Middlesbrough. 5-1 tells a story. It always makes Sikhs, of course.

The minority in that memorable vote to stop the Cup ties are inclined to "toss" over the trestles. Fact!

A friend of mine writes to say that Chelsea licked the Toffee a week ago. We Chal-sea about that.

Jim M'Menemy in reflective mood.

I have just had another wire from Manchester to say that I may expect a sensation there. I can't help it.

Willie Nicol is having a laugh at the S.F.A. No wonder. He has seen some of the representatives.

What joy there was at Newcastle last night. The United left Sunderland without consulting the Burgh Surveyor.

After that result at Huddersfield, no wonder "Black"-pool is in mourning. No "Field" flowers are requested.

St Johnstone kept in mind the saying—"Keep your eye on Paisley." The Saints rubbed it into Abercorn to the tune of 4-0.

When is Glossop to close up?

Partick partook of their Christmas loot one day late.

The Clyde is on the ebb. They got to know of it at Dumbarton.

The "Canaries" are still singing, despite the war—Norwich City, 4; Gillingham, 0.

How is it that when Aberdeen seem to be deein' they come to life again? The Fir Parkers would like to know.

Who is the Aitken who has been on trial with St Mirren? He is "itchin'" to get into First League football.

Raith Rovers were blotted out at Tynecastle. The Hearts found the range quite early on, and the rest was easy.

Allow these Throstles when they are in song! Wire Burnley if you don't believe me. 3-0 is worth singing about.

Preston should have pressed on Lincoln City, if only for strategic reasons. And, yet, to think of it, they never fired a shot.

This is not war news, but Aston Villa was absolutely razed to the ground yesterday by Bolton Wanderers. Seven shells hit the mark.

Hearts are marching steadily on their way to the League championship. What! Was that a protest I heard from Parkhead way?

Paisley folks were in high feather after the whistle tootled at Love Street. A 2-0 victory against Falkirk is surely changed days.

Dundee could never play the Hibs. Why, I wonder? Even in Harry Rennie's days they used to look forward to a display of goalkeeping.

Willie Milne, of Dundee, is the only professional player who has sacrificed £4 for 7s. The club don't see their way clear to do as the others. Need perhaps.

A satirist suggests that the time is now opportune to send the Accies to an academy where they teach them little things about football.

Don't you agree with Willie Nicol, of Falkirk, when he says that the S.F.A.'s decision is ridiculous? He fathers the "Bairns," you must remember.

When Tottenham Hotspur met Sheffield Wednesday they didn't care a tee-tottem-tuppence. The Wednesday were hoping it was some other day. Oh!!

Who helped Dick Riley to get his kilt on after the match against Rangers? It was a terrible ordeal. If they would do away with these pins, Dick, wouldn't it be an advantage?

Dundee were very pathetic on Christmas Day. They experimented Hogg in centre, but he got absolutely no support. Some of the players will have to take lessons at a night school.

Peter Nellies seems to have the vote for the left half position when consideration is given to the best representative team. Caps won't be conferred this season, however. The "knuts" put the "Peter" on it,

Wasn't it a good thing there was no "boxing" yesterday? There were one or two "scuffles" all the same. J. B. Kerr, of the Queen's, was sent to the pavilion. He didn't like N. Harris' "tweed"ly bits.

Third Lanark did what some people, knowing their foibles, thought they would do against Rangers. The "draw" was a draw in more senses than one. The gates, at least, were on their hinges.

A certain Scottish player asked his Directors "if he accepted the King's shilling would he receive a proportion of his wages?" His wages will be O! You can see through it, can't you?

Woolwich Arsenal, 6 Leicester Fosse, 0. Bristol City, 7; Grimsby Town, 0. Two of them seem to have been in the firing line. Two of them seem to have been badly wounded.

Dumbarton will yet defy the mischievous exploits of a cunning enemy. Keep on winning, you Boghead men and don't be "dummies." There will, I hope, be no need to speak.

What Scottish club was asked by a player to grant him a concession in wages if he said "Yes" and was told that he could have none? It's the only club in Scotland. Can you guess it? There's going to be a story about this.

Were the soldiers at the front having their little joke?, At half-time in a match between teams representing two British companies, a sergeant made a recruiting speech, appealing to the spectators to give up the game in time of war. I have proof for this.

The decision of the S.F.A. is still occupying their minds, and the "knuts" don't seem pleased somehow. I wonder why? The vote, of course, was 14—13. You don't mean to tell me that the recalcitrant three have regrets?

M'Turk, of Clyde, takes a rest.

Morton rubbed it into Ayr United at Greenock. I am afraid Ayr won't be so near the top of the League ladder I at one time fancied.

Dykehead made no bones about the undecided Qualifying Cup tie against Galston. The margin—5-1—was pretty decisive, wasn't it? Ask Galston.

Certain friends tell me that certain people in the football world are going strong on Powderhall. Not a word other than that which I have given you. 'Nuff said.

Dundee are "doon 'a spoot," as they say in Farfar. They have lost eleven goals in two days, and every "eleven" soul of them has to admit it.

Who would have thought that Airdrieonians would have gone down at Kilmarnock? Certainly not the crowd who frequent Broomfield.

SCOTTISH LEAGUE.

First Division.

	P.	W.	L.	D.	Goals. F.	A.	Pts.
Hearts,	21	19	1	1	52	12	39
Celtic,	21	16	2	3	51	17	35
Morton,	20	11	3	6	44	28	28
Rangers,	21	11	7	3	30	24	25
Ayr United,	18	8	6	4	33	25	20
Partick Thistle,	20	7	7	6	40	26	20
St. Mirren,	20	6	6	8	32	24	20
Dundee,	22	7	9	6	35	41	20
Hibs,	22	8	8	6	33	41	20
Hamilton Acas.,	20	7	9	4	27	28	18
Falkirk,	21	6	9	6	32	40	18
Dumbarton,	20	7	10	3	28	35	17
Airdrieonians,	21	5	10	6	26	35	16
Raith Rovers,	21	5	10	6	21	32	16
Aberdeen,	20	4	12	4	19	44	12
Kilmarnock,	22	5	12	5	19	45	15
Clyde,	19	6	11	2	20	29	14
Motherwell,	20	3	12	5	18	44	11
Queen's Park,	20	3	12	5	20	45	11

Second Division.

	P.	W.	L.	D.	Goals. F.	A.	Pts.
Leith,	17	9	4	4	36	28	22
Clydebank,	17	9	5	3	30	26	21
East Stirlingshire,	13	7	3	3	28	17	18
St. Bernard,	15	8	6	1	22	24	17
St Johnstone,	13	6	3	4	34	24	16
Albion Rovers,	17	4	7	6	19	26	14
Abercorn,	17	4	7	6	26	40	14
Johnstone,	14	5	6	3	22	30	13
Dundee Hibs,	13	4	3	6	18	26	14
Vale of Leven,	16	3	8	4	23	36	10
Lochgelly United,	9	3	4	2	10	18	8
Arthurlie,	13	1	9	3	15	31	5

ENGLISH LEAGUE.

First Division.

	P.	W.	L.	D.	Goals. F.	A.	Pts.
Oldham Athletic,	19	12	2	5	48	29	29
Manchester City,	19	10	3	6	26	29	26
Blackburn Rovers,	20	11	5	4	39	20	26
Sheffield Wednesday,	20	10	5	5	40	20	25
Bradford City,	20	10	6	4	39	32	24
West Bromwich A.,	20	9	7	4	30	21	23
Aston Villa,	19	8	6	5	34	30	21
Bradford,	19	8	6	5	34	39	20
Middlesbrough,	19	9	9	1	40	42	19
Sheffield United,	19	8	6	5	28	25	18
Newcastle United,	20	6	9	5	28	28	17
Bolton Wanderers,	21	7	12	2	44	48	16
Liverpool,	19	6	9	4	28	30	16
Burnley,	19	4	8	7	24	31	15
Tottenham Hotspur,	19	5	9	5	21	32	15
Manchester United,	18	3	9	6	21	32	12
Notts County,	19	3	10	6	21	31	12

Second Division.

	P.	W.	L.	D.	Goals. F.	A.	Pts.
Derby County,	19	12	3	3	38	14	29
Huddersfield Town,	19	12	5	2	34	17	26
Birmingham,	19	10	5	4	35	19	24
The Arsenal,	19	10	6	4	42	24	24
Barnsley,	19	10	7	2	23	27	22
Bristol City,	19	9	6	4	41	27	22
Preston North End,	19	8	6	5	25	18	21
Fulham,	19	9	7	3	30	23	21
Wolverhampton Wan.,	19	8	7	4	30	23	20
Wolverhampton Wan.,	19	8	8	3	30	23	19
Bury,	18	8	8	2	32	34	18
Clapton Orient,	19	6	7	6	23	23	18
Lincoln City,	19	7	9	4	27	24	18
Leeds City,	20	7	9	4	36	29	18
Grimsby Town,	20	6	9	5	20	41	17
Stockport County,	19	6	9	4	26	26	16
Notts Forest,	20	6	9	6	26	35	16
Blackpool,	19	6	11	2	22	35	14
Leicester Fosse,	19	4	11	4	18	48	12
Glossop,	19	3	13	3	16	39	9

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EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS IN ENGLISH LEAGUE.

VILLA, WEDNESDAY, AND 'BRO' SMASHED UP.

SURPRISING UPHEAVALS IN HOLIDAY FOOTBALL.

Oldham Athletic, by a smashing victory over Bradford, lead easily in the race for the championship.

The Trotters created a sensation by going to Birmingham and beating Aston Villa by 7-1, a defeat the like of which the "Villains" have never received in their First League history.

Middlesbro' continue to fall from grace. Their latest delinquency is at Nottingham, where the meek and lowly Lambs rubbed it in to the tune of 5-0.

And Sheffield Wednesday came a terrible cropper in London. How the 'Spurs managed to beat them by 6-1 is certainly astonishing.

And Burnley go down the table at the double. There have been some upheavals these Christmas times in both Divisions.

Derby County move on the right road, and look sure of going up.

Bradford City, 0 Everton, - - 1

At Valley Parade, before 32,000 spectators. The ground was sticky, but both sides played brilliant football. The Everton's goal was hotly assailed time after time, and Shepherd struck the post with a grand drive. Marshall and Bond were constantly dashing down the wings, but the inside forwards could not find a way through the strong defence. Fox, however, struck the crossbar, and Fern saved another great shot. Half-time—Bradford City, 0; Everton, 0.

Everton had a great deal the better of the game in the second half, Bradford City appearing to tire after pressing for ten minutes, during which Fern saved cleverly from Shepherd and Fox. Ewart made some good saves from Parker, whose shooting was invariably on the mark. Everton at length had their reward, Chedgzoy scoring from a weak clearance by M'Donald eight minutes from close. Campbell was off during the greater part of the second half.

Liverpool, - 1 Manc'ester U., 1

At Anfield, before 20,000 spectators, and on a treacherous turf. Both goals had narrow escapes. Pagnam made a couple of fine efforts to get through, and Beale saved from Sheldon and Lacey. The home team were the cleverer, but they could not penetrate the fine defence of the United, Beale saving from Nicol at short range. Interval:—Liverpool, 0; Manchester, 0.

Early in the second half Beale saved from Fairfoul and Lacey, whilst at the other end Norton missed a grand chance from a centre by Meredith. Liverpool opened the scoring through Pagnam, who dribbled between the backs and defeated Beale with a fine shot. West, who had taken the right back position once Hodge, kicked out from the goal line from Pagnam. Stacey equalised from a penalty for a foul on Anderson near the end.

Sunderland,- 2 Newcastle U., 4

This popular fixture attracted 15,000 spectators at Roker Park. The weather was hazy and the ground heavy. Hudspeth the United left back, scored after six minutes with a long, dropping shot from the half-way line, and Mordue equalised four minutes later.

Five minutes afterwards Pailor again gave the United the lead, but Burnett equalised at the end of the next five minutes. Play was very strenuous and Higgins missed an open goal. Interval—Sunderland, 2; Newcastle United, 2.

The second half, like the first, was marked by very strenuous play, and there were repeated stoppages owing to temporary injuries. Hay fouled Mordue in the penalty area, and Best, taking the kick, sent wide. Sunderland were the more aggressive, and Mellor's charge had a series of miraculous escapes. Scott, too, saved smartly on a number of occasions. Hibbert missed a grand chance, but then scored two successive goals for the United.

Sheffield U.,- 1 Blackburn R., 2

In miserable weather and before 25,000 spectators. Blackburn made numerous changes, Smith, Cowerl, Dawson, and Crompton being absent. Sheffield were short of English. Sheffield opened the attack, but Blackburn got away after six minutes, Chapman beating the Sheffield defence and scoring easily. Blackburn continued the pressure. Hodgkinson put in a good shot, which Gough fumbled, the ball going into the net. Hodgkinson just missed, with Gough beaten. Interval—Sheffield United, 0; Blackburn, 2.

Sheffield again attacked, and after five minutes Masterman got through, putting in a lovely schot which gave Robinson no chance. After this it was all Sheffield's game for some time, Robinson clearing hot shots in succession. Blackburn got away, Simpson hitting the post with a fast shot. Blackburn put on full pressure, and had the best of the game to the finish, but the Sheffield defence was sound.

Manchester C., 2 Chelsea, - - 1

At Manchester, in fine weather, before 20,000 people. City played Gartland and Hindmarsh for Fletcher and Brennan, and the Chelsea had Walker for Taylor. Playing with the sun at their backs the City fiercely attacked, and after two minutes Taylor scored with an oblique shot, which gave Molyneux no chance. After twenty-eight minutes Thomson equalised for Chelsea, beating Smith with the greatest ease. Interval:—Manchester City, 1; Chelsea, 1.

Manchester had by far the better of the play in the second half, and after twenty-six minutes Howard beat Molyneux with a magnificent shot, which gave the goalkeeper no chance of saving. Directly afterwards Howard got in another fine shot from Cartwright's centre, but the ball struck the upright and bounced over the line. Chelsea played up pluckily, and were well served by their custodian.

Oldham Ath., 6 Bradford, - - 2

At Oldham. The Athletic had the same team as yesterday, but Bradford played Kirby and Jobey for Smith and Crozier, both hurt yesterday. The weather was fine, and the ground on the soft side after the heavy rain this morning. The attendance was 16,000. The first half produced a hard and fast game. Kemp scored, and Little equalised in the first minute. Cook scored from a penalty, and Kemp got a third. Timmon a fourth, and Kemp a fifth. Athletic, 5; Bradford, 1.

After a ding-dong first half play ceased in the second half, but it was Oldham's game almost all the time. Kemp scored Athletic's sixth goal, and Oldham's three inside men missed openings. Matthews made two great saves from M'Candless and a wonderful clearance from Bauchop. Hodson saved well from Stirling. Scattergood made brilliant saves from Kemp and Pilkington. Kirby shot through Matthews' hands for a tame goal.

Aston Villa, - 1 Bolton W., - 7

In fine weather, before 20,000 spectators. The Villa won the toss, and Stephenson scored from a corner. M'Lauchlan retired injured, and Smith equalised, while Roberts scored a second after Hardy had saved from Smith. Bolton showed surprising form, and from a corner Smith added their third point, while six minutes later Hilton put on a fourth. Interval—Villa, 1; Bolton Wanderers, 4.

On resuming the Villa were still without M'Lachlan, and played in very indifferent style. After sixty minutes Roberts scored a fifth for Bolton, and from a penalty against Littlewood Smith added a sixth. The home side could do nothing right, and soon Smith added a seventh for the Wanderers.

Notts County, 5 Middlesbro', 1

Played in fair weather. Twelve thousand spectators witnessed spirited football at Nottingham. Dale was substituted for Lamb in the Notts' eleven. There was no change in the personnel of the visiting team, but Elliott was transferred to centre forward, Carr going inside right. The opening exchanges favoured Middlesbrough, Iremonger saving hot shots from Tinsley. Notts afterwards manifested great improvement, Dale scoring in twenty minutes from Henshall's pass. Henshall added a second seventeen minutes later, and Richards a third a minute before the interval. Half-time—Notts, 3; Middlesbrough, 0.

Middlesbrough resumed at a rare pace, Notts' defence being severely tried. J. Carr scored for the visitors four minutes after the change of ends, after Iremonger, Notts' custodian, had cleverly frustrated a fine effort by Elliott. In Middlesbrough attack Wilson and Carr were conspicuously clever, but the Notts' backs—Morley and Emberton—proved consistently sound, breaking up many dangerous combinations. Dale registered a fourth for Notts twenty-two minutes from the end, Richards obtaining the fifth nine minutes later.

Tottenham H., 6 Sheffield W., 1

Played before 3000 spectators. The Wednesday played the same team as yesterday, but the 'Spurs had Pearson and Sparrow for Collins and Cantrell. The Wednesday were unlucky not to score during a hot struggle, then Bliss beat Davison with a fine shot, and added a second from a corner. Steel put on a third, and Sparrow a fourth. Interval—'Spurs, 4; Wednesday, 0.

On resuming the 'Spurs, who seemed to revel in the mud, again attacked, and after four minutes, following a corner, Bliss scored their fifth goal. Wednesday immediately dashed away, M'Lean scoring from Robertson's pass. Play was now much more even, and with both back divisions defending grandly the forwards had few chances. Seven minutes from the end Bliss scored a sixth from a free kick. The 'Spurs played their best game of the season.

W. Brom. A., 3 Burnley, - - 0

Burnley played Sewell, Pickering, and Hodgson, for Dawson, Lindsay, and Tranter. The weather was fine, and there were 12,000 spectators. Albion won the toss, and had a little the better of the play, Smith opening the scoring after twenty-three minutes' play. Jephcotts was very conspicuous, and at length Swift put Albion two up. Interval—West Bromwich Albion, 2; Burnley, 0.

In the second half play was poor. It was not until some thirty minutes had passed that Bowser dashed in and scored a third point for the Albion, who held the advantage until the finish. Boyle played a fine game for the visitors.

SECOND DIVISION.

Arsenal, - - 6 Leicester F., 0

Rain ceased during the game, but Highbury Ground was terribly muddy, with water in pools. Arsenal pressed, except for occasional breaks away. Lewis scored in ten minutes, M'Kinnon and Flanagan adding goals before twenty-five minutes had elapsed. Benson missed a penalty kick, Lewis, utilising his opponent's blunder, shot a fourth. Eight minutes after the resumption Leicester lost Hardie, injured. Lewis scored his third and King added another from a penalty. The attendance was about 6000 people.

Barnsley, - - 1 Clapton O., - 0

About 6000 spectators saw this game. Barnsley played Lees for Halliwell. In the first half keen football was seen on a heavy ground. Moore netted, but the referee ruled offside. After sixty minutes Downs scored from a penalty. Donkin netted later, but the point was disallowed. The second half was all in favour of Barnsley, who won well. Downs, Bethune, Donkin, and Moore did well, and Clapton was best served by their defence and Steel. The forwards fell away.

Bristol City, 7 Grimsby T., - 0

At Bristol in fine weather on heavy ground, and before 12,000 spectators. The same teams lined up as at Grimsby on the previous day. Bristol scored a rousing victory, obtaining all the goals in the first half, getting four of them at one period in six minutes. The scorers were:—Harris (2), Brown (2), Meesham (2), and Burton. The City forwards did not appear to fully exert themselves in the second half.

Bury, - - - 1 Birmingham, 3

Played before 12,000 spectators in fine weather. For Birmingham Lodges was inside right and Sprigg outside left. Though Bury had more of the attack in the first half, the visitors registered twice, Lodges and Rowlson scoring subsequently. Bury obtained a goal from a melee. After the interval Windridge increased Birmingham's lead. The game was keenly contested, and the visitors had a narrow escape.

Derby County, 1 Notts Forest, 0

The return match between these teams attracted 15,000 people to the Derby ground. Derby tried a new outside left, Quantrill, of Lincoln, who created a favourable impression. Derby did a lot of attacking, but Leonard missed several chances, whilst Jones on the occasion of an attack by the Forest, struck the crossbar. Derby took the lead seven minutes from the close, Grimes centring and Leonard heading through.

Hudd'rsfi'ld T., 5 Blackpool, - 0

At Huddersfield, before 10,000 spectators, in fine weather. The turf was heavy, but Huddersfield played a fast game, and monopolised the play in the first half, during which Islip scored twice and Fayers once for them. The home side were leading at the interval 3-0. Thirty minutes after the resumption Islip scored his third and fourth goals for his side after brilliant dribbles. Blackpool improved, but finished badly. Shields scored a fifth for Huddersfield.

Leeds C., - - 3 Glossop, - - 0

There would be only 10,000 people present to witness this game, which was played in dull weather on a sodden turf. Leeds had by far the best of matters all through, and were soon three goals ahead. Bainbridge, Price, and M'Leod each scored within fifteen minutes of the start. Glossop played better after the interval, but were well held by the Leeds backs.

Preston N.E., 0 Lincoln City, 0

At Deepdale in fine weather before, 10,000 people. Preston had to find substitutes for Newton, Broadhurst, and Holdsworth, all injured at Lincoln yesterday, while Osborn played centre forward after a long rest vice Grant. Lincoln was unchanged. Preston pressed all the first half, splendid shots by Gillow, Osborn, and Macauley striking the woodwork or being grandly saved by Butler. In the second half Butler again saved his side. Holbem was ordered off.

W'v'rh'mt'nW. 1 Hull City, - 2

Ten thousand spectators witnessed this return match at Molyneux Grounds. The weather was fine, but the ground was heavy. After brilliant work by Brooks, Needham was tripped, Garrity scoring easily from the penalty. An even spell of play followed, and then Lee equalised for Hull with a simple goal. Shortly after the interval Stevens, with a sharp drive, gave Hull the lead. In the last two minutes Wanderers took four corners, but, though working hard, they failed to draw level.

"Inquirer."—No; the goalposts are not to be broken up at Dens Park. They think they will have some use for them yet.

Greenock Morton are to keep in close touch with the leaders. They made Ayr United look very small fry.

The race between Celtic and Hearts still continues. They both won yesterday. Would that one or other of them would make a slip!

The scoring of yesterday was the highest of the season. The peculiar thing is that the majority of them registered nothing. See it? Scan the results.

The Thistle weren't

BEGIN TO-DAY THIS GREAT STORY OF THE WAR.

DASHING DICK CARRICK.

The Beginning of the Story.

Dick Carrick, a daring and accomplished young man of independent means, undertakes the task of going to Berlin to rescue his sweetheart,

Ellice Remington, the daughter of a wealthy engineer. Ellice had set out for Germany before the war on a holiday in company with Mrs Gaylor, the wife of

Nardon Gaylor, old Remington's junior partner. Gaylor is in reality a German agent, and a month before the outbreak of hostilities received a mysterious code telegram announcing that war was certain. The telegram was signed by

Herr Baumeister, who is chief of the German spy organisation, and whom Dick Carrick cleverly dodges shortly after his arrival in Belgium.

Dick ultimately arrives in Berlin, where he has several narrow escapes, and discovers that Ellice is a prisoner in a private lunatic asylum.

By adopting a clever ruse Dick succeeds in getting his sweetheart out of the toils of the asylum doctor, who was plotting, along with the Gaylors and Baumeister, to get a large sum of money from Ellice's father for her release.

Dick learns of the pitiful plight of a young English couple—Mr and Mrs Dayre—who had been arrested on their honeymoon. Mrs Dayre is sentenced to be shot as a spy, but Dick succeeds in effecting her escape.

Posing as John Hooston, an American journalist, Dick obtains a permit from the Kaiser to allow Mr Dayre to leave for England. He has been outwitting Baumeister at every turn, but the German at last wins a trick when he gets "John Hooston" sent out of Berlin. Dick escapes from the train at the little town of Gunzdorf, but in the hotel where he seeks shelter two real American journalists innocently give him away, and he is sentenced by some German officers billeted at the hotel to be shot at dawn.

The Innkeeper's Daughter.

DICK remembered how he had once before been condemned to death as a spy, and had managed to escape. But then that was in the open, where he had a chance, and where there were only two soldiers to deal with; while here there were six and a sergeant, all of them armed, of course. He had managed to bluff the two soldiers in the train, but that was different to trying to bluff seven, especially in a hotel which was simply crammed full of superior officers.

So Dick sat down on the bed, his thoughts heavy and oppressive. It was not of himself that he was thinking so much as of Ellice left behind in Berlin. True, she was with Henri and Juliette, but he knew that she would be missing him, and it was not fair to leave the responsibility of her care to the two French people, for they had themselves to look after.

Perhaps, too, Ellice might never hear of him again—might never hear of his death. He would be shot here—thank God, they were not going to hang him!—at daybreak, buried in a nameless grave, and the Germans would move on, never giving a thought to the unknown spy they had left behind in a shallow grave. If only he could send some message! And yet how could he do that without betraying Ellice?

But wait, wait a moment, he thought. Perhaps those two real American journalists could help him. It might be that they would be allowed to convey some message for him.

"Can I speak to your officer for a moment?" said Dick in German to the sergeant.

"It has not been forbidden," said the sergeant stiffly. "I will inquire."

He went to the door, called down the corridor, and then nodded back at Dick.

"It is all right; he comes," he said.

"Well, what do you want?" asked the officer, a young, fair-haired fellow, quite decent outwardly in his behaviour.

From his manner of speaking this young man was an officer and a gentleman—at least, so Dick thought.

"What can I do for you?" he repeated.

"I want to send a message, a message to—to Britain," said Dick.

He thought he would risk trusting one of the American journalists with a message to Mr Remington; he would see what sort of fellows these Americans were. Perhaps he could tell them everything, even where Ellice was, and they would help. It was a forlorn hope, but something had to be done, for Dick was shivering with anguish. The more he thought of Ellice the worse her predicament seemed to be. If she were discovered in Berlin in disguise who could tell what her fate might be?

"To Britain! To Britain!" repeated the officer. "You want to send a message to Britain?"

The officer's voice grew suddenly harsh and stern and his face flushed as he continued—

"To Britain! Ah, then you are an Englishman, a British spy. Pah! We thought you were French, but you are English, English! No, no, nothing shall be done for you. You will be shot; you will be buried, that is all. Ask no more favours, you British spy, you!"

He made as if to spit on the floor with a gesture of contempt, and then turned and left the room.

How they love us, thought Dick to himself. Pretty sort of gentleman he is to behave like that when another man is going to his death in a few hours. But now let me think, let me think.

But no, think as hard as he might, no way out came to him, and Dick sat there with his head between his hands, realising that at last the great game was up.

He sat there till the first thin, faint light of dawn breaking in through the uncurtained window made him aware that he had now only a little while to live. The soldiers had been dozing in relays of two at a time, leaving five to guard him, and now they were all being called smartly to attention by the sergeant.

"Mein Herr, the time is now," said this man to Dick. "If you have prayers to say, say them, for it is to be at the half-hour."

He pointed to the little clock on the mantelpiece, which showed that it was now twenty past five. It was a beautiful autumn morning, giving promise of a lovely day. Outside, the birds were beginning to cheep and whistle.

Dick cast one glance through the window, and in the garden below he saw an early-rising German girl going round the paths looking lovingly at her flowers. She looked up at the window, their eyes met, and she waved her hands to him as if beckoning to him to open the window.

"The young lady out there, sergeant, she is pleasant to look at!" said Dick. "It is good to have something pleasant to look at before one dies. She seems to wish to speak to me. May I?"

"There can be no harm in that. You two stand by the window."

Two soldiers stood one on each side of the window, which Dick opened. The girl came directly underneath and spoke.

"You are the British spy who is to be shot, aren't you?" she said, speaking in quite good English.

"I have the honour, Fraulein," answered Dick.

"Then I think I've found something that belongs to you—a notebook. Perhaps you would like it back? And if there is any message you would like to write in it for a friend, for your sweetheart, for your parents, I will try and send it. They will let me do that, I think. I am the daughter of the proprietor of this hotel, and I have told the commanding officer what I wish to do. He said I might return your book to you, and that I may even speak to you from below here, but no closer. Catch, mein Herr!"

Dick was puzzled. Why should this German innkeeper's daughter go out of her way to help him—to offer to take any message? But she had found his notebook, and she was standing there under the window ready to throw it up to him. Ah, was there a slender hope here? Perhaps—perhaps there was the ghost of a chance!

"Hurry, mein Herr. It is now nearly the time," said the girl as she deftly flung up the notebook to Dick. "I have permission to send a message from you, mein Herr," she cried. "You will write it in that book, will you? There are many blank sheets, I see. You will write it."

Somehow she seemed to Dick to be speaking with meaning, and her eyes seemed to be trying to convey a message to him.

"I thank you very much for your kindness, Fraulein," answered Dick. "I will write a message for you to send."

"I can give you just three minutes for you to write your final message, mein Herr," said the sergeant. "Three minutes, that is all."

Dick sat down and opened the notebook, meaning to write a few lines to Mr Remington in London, and then as he took out his pencil he hesitated. How could he let him know where Ellice was without betraying her, without letting other people know too!

This girl, this innkeeper's daughter, was she to be trusted? She might be a spy! They might be just trying to find out something about him. No, no; he would take care not to be caught in such a trap.

And Dick turned the pages of the notebook till he came to the Emperor's signature. With this he would have one last try.

But stop, what was that? At the bottom of the page, some distance from the bold "Wilhelm," was written in tiny yet plain writing—

"When they stand you against the door, put your hand behind you and turn the handle, and the door will open. It is your only chance."

That was all—just those few cryptic words. Oh, it might be that there was yet a chance of escape! Dick read them again and again, till they were burnt on to his brain, and then he tore off the sheet of paper on which they were written and shredded it to bits slowly and methodically, as if he had been writing a message and then changed his mind about sending it. Someone was trying to help him, that was evident, he thought. Could it be the girl herself?

The Garden of Death.

"Now, mein Herr, it is time for you, please."

The voice of the sergeant was reminding Dick that it was now time for him to walk down the stairs and out into the garden of death

Down the stairs he went, closely guarded by the soldiers, the sergeant going on ahead. In the hall they passed three officers, who drew themselves together and saluted him as a man about to die. Mechanically Dick returned the salute, and then out into the freshness of the morning, out into the garden they went.

Once outside Dick half-turned his head and looked back at the hotel. Not a blind was yet drawn up, not a curious face was looking out of any of the windows. There was only just the condemned and the firing party—no one to look at them. Even the three officers they had passed in the hall remained indoors.

"That is the doing of Fraulein Gretchen, the proprietor's daughter," said the sergeant, a not unkindly, middle-aged man. "She has ordered that no one is to look out, for, as she says, the death of a man is not an entertainment. She has ordered it so. One of the attendants told me so last night. And now, mein Herr, it is my duty!"

He produced a linen handkerchief from his pocket, but Dick shook his head.

"No, thank you," he said. "I prefer to die with my eyes unbandaged and my wrists unbound."

"Very good, mein Herr; very good. It shall be as you wish. I will ask you to stand here. The firing will be at twelve paces."

He took hold of Dick by the arm and gently placed him by a door in the stone wall that ran round the garden, and as he did so Dick felt his hand behind him quietly. He felt a handle, which seemed to turn of itself, and like a flash of lightning he was through the door, had banged it after him, and had dashed away before the sergeant had time to turn round—before the startled soldiers, who were getting their rifles ready, had time to fire.

As soon as Dick had banged the door he felt himself clutched by the arm, and there stood the hotelkeeper's pretty daughter.

"Quick, quick, in there; hide in there!" she said.

She pointed, pushing him towards another door on his left which he could dimly see through the shrubbery.

"Stop there until I come," she went on. "Oh, do be quick!"

Dick plunged through the door, which was only a few paces off, and as he looked back he saw the girl tearing at the top of her speed down the shrubbery—her shrubbery it was behind that stone wall—while from the other side of the wall there came shouts and blows on the door.

Dick smiled, actually smiled, to himself. He had escaped for the moment. Well, if he had escaped so far, he would escape still farther, and he leant up against the door in the little tiny stifling room, little better than a cupboard, which was evidently used as a gardener's storehouse.

He felt now and again as if he must sneeze, the pungent dust which he had disturbed by his sudden entrance irritating his nostrils, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he managed to keep quiet.

The shouts and the blows on the door had by now died away, and he looked round for a weapon in case he was discovered, in case of need, and he felt a little thrill of joy as his hand clasped itself over the haft of a very useful-looking axe.

"Well, at anyrate, I'll die fighting if they do find me," he said to himself. "But that girl, I wonder why she did it?"

Just at that instant there came a little scratching at the door, and Dick grasped his axe tightly, but faintly he heard a little "Pist!—pist! It is I, Englishman; it is I!" a voice whispered.

Cautiously Dick opened the door, and the pretty German girl entered.

"You are safe for now," she said, her breath coming fast and irregular. "I have sent them off on a wrong chase. I told them that you had jumped on to a bicycle which happened to be outside and had gone off. Oh! I showed them the way. I said you had gone that way."

And she laughed—actually laughed—this pretty girl.

"Now, you stay here until night," she went on. "They'll never dream of looking for you here, for they think you are already miles away. Then I will come and let you out."

"You are more than good—you are brave and noble," whispered back Dick. "Whatever made you save me? How did you manage to do it?"

"I have an English lover. I have been in Britain, and I know the English are really good. They told me you were a British spy, and I thought of my lover, and that for his sake I must try and save an Englishman. Then I picked up your notebook, and I thought if I could only write something in it that I could give you without anyone knowing—that perhaps I might be able to help you. Oh! it was all nonsense my saying that the commanding officer had given me permission! That was only for the sergeant and those soldiers to hear. The commanding officer is in bed, snoring I expect. Pah! he was drunk last night. I knew that they would put you against that door, for they shot two Frenchmen there last week. Ugh!" She shuddered a little.

"I though if you were told to open the door that you would take the chance of escape, and then I could help you. As soon as you were through, as soon as the door was shut, I shot the catch to, and they could do find me they'll shoot her as well as me. Now, you've got a motor car, haven't you? Very well, then, lend me a motor cap, a pair of goggles, and a motor coat, and I'll get away as your chauffeur. Oh, it'll be an easy job! I don't suppose you've got a chauffeur with you, have you?"

"No," said the American; "we're driving ourselves. But that don't matter, for if it comes to the worst we can say you were lost, and have only just turned up. Gee, that's a good idea! We'll have you out of this in five shakes of a cow's tail."

Off went the American, and returned in a few minutes with a motor cap, a pair of goggles, and a coat. Dick discarded the mouldy old coat and resumed his own garment again, and, with the collar of the motor coat turned up and wearing the goggles and the cap pulled well over his ears, he walked straight out of the tool shed, through the shrubbery, and up to the front of the hotel where the Americans' car was waiting.

"Get the girl here," whispered Dick. "I want to thank her and to say good-bye."

"Can we have some cigars, Fraulein Gretchen, served by your own fair fingers as a last favour?" cried the American.

He winked, and Gretchen knew what he meant, and she brought out the box of cigars herself.

"I shall never forget you, never, never, never, and there's a girl I love who will be thinking of you too. Goodbye, you brave, you noble girl, and to a German one day I will repay my debt."

The cigars were selected and lit, and just at that moment the German commanding officer strolled up to the car.

"Going along now, gentlemen?" he said. "Well, good speed to you. Perhaps we shall meet at the front. And, by the way, as a special favour, with regard to the escape of that spy, you might perhaps be able to keep the matter out of your paper, eh?"

"Oh, yes, certainly, certainly! Always glad to oblige anyone," was the hearty reply. "Now, then, Hooker, get a move on!"

Dick, addressed as Hooker, the chauffeur, jumped into the driving seat, touched up the car, and away she went, bearing him into—safety.

"Which way shall we go?" asked Dick, when he had driven a couple of miles outside the town.

"Gee, go straight ahead as far as I can tell by the map. We want to get to Berlin. But, say, perhaps you'll just pull up on the roadside here and let us have a chat? We're kind of interested in you."

Dick stopped the car, and was soon telling the two journalists all about himself

"So you know young Perry Carton, of the American Embassy in Berlin, do you?" said one of them delightedly. "Well, if Perry Carton backed you, gee, you must be about the goods! Say, you've got a nerve, ain't you? An American journalist, and you swanked the Kaiser out of a permit too! Well, if that ain't what a real journalist would have done! We forgive you, we forgive you. And now, what's your next move?"

"Well, I want to get to Berlin. I've a girl waiting there for me, you know. But I must tell you that I'm not a bit like what I appear to be, for, as they say in glorious melodrama, this is a disguise, and the worst of it is I can't get it off unless I can get a special preparation to remove it. And I can't go back to Berlin in this face, you know, for some of Baumeister's people would spot me at once as the John Hooston who was turned out of their little city."

"Nice quiet times we live in, eh?" said one of the Americans, turning to his friend.

"Well, now," he went on to Dick, "what about getting the stuff to clean up your face with?"

"Oh, I can get that in the nearest town at any chemist's," answered Dick.

And so into the nearest town Dick drove his two new friends, pulled up at the first chemist's, obtained the necessary ingredients for removing the well-applied disguise from his face, and when at a considerable disfance from the town again he set to work to make himself appear as he really was.

The Americans' car was provided with every convenience, including a Thermos flask, which had been filled with hot water at the last stoppage; there was a little india-rubber basin and soap and towels, and after a vigorous scrubbing and drying Dick stood before them the handsome, open-faced young fellow that he really was.

"Well, if that ain't a licker!" said one of the Americans in genuine admiration. "And now for Berlin!"

The car started off again, and after a merry run for about twenty or thirty miles they came to a town which was evidently the junction of an important railway line. Here everything was animation and bustle. Sentries were posted on the outskirts of the town, and the car was stopped.

"Your papers?" demanded the sentry.

The two journalists showed their passports; the sentry looked at them, and then turned to speak to his superior, who had just come up, showing him the passports.

"These passports are quite in order, gentlemen," said the officer in English—it was astonishing how many German officers spoke our language — "but haven't you one for your chauffeur? We have our orders to be very particular, for a spy, an English spy, allowing himself to be an American journalist, escaped one morning, and it has since been ascertained that he escaped once before from the train in which he had been sent out of Berlin. He is getting quite a notoriety. He goes under the name of Hooston, John Hooston, and says that he is attached to the Chicago Herald. His mother also was in Berlin, living with two Dutch people named Van Donk, but they've been arrested."

Dick gave an involuntary start—"and all that is wanted now is to get this Mr John Hooston himself. We have had all this news by telegraph and telephone this morning. The authorities attach great importance to the capture of this man."

"Why, that must be the fellow we saw last night!" exclaimed one of the Americans. "Quite right. John Hooston said he was connected with the Chicago Herald. Ah, he was a lad, wasn't he? Why, that's our paper, you know."

"Well, the commanding officer has satisfied himself about you two gentlemen, and we shall be pleased to speed you on your way. But your chauffeur, I am afraid, we shall have to detain till we have made further inquiries. When did you arrive in Germany, then?" he went on, turning to Dick.

"Last July a year," said Dick.

"Name and address where you lived, the police station where you reported on taking up your residence in this country, and the one where you reported on leaving where you last resided? Also when did you lose your passport, and why have you not procured another one?"

Dick knew that he was in a tight corner. The matter of the papers was always a difficulty in Germany, where they are so bureaucratic, and where, especially in this war time, everyone has to carry papers of identification—that is, unless he is of German birth.

Dick invented something on the spur of the moment, but the officer looked at him.

"You lie, and you know you are lying," the officer commented, and turned again to the two Americans.

"I regret, gentlemen, to have to take stern measures," he said, "but your chauffeur is telling me lies, and it is, therefore, doubly my duty to detain him."

"John Hooston at Last!"

"That's all right for the present," said the American, getting out of the car, "but there will be others in the hotel who will perhaps wonder who the strange workman is. I can't expect to remain undiscovered for long. I must get out of here, for I mustn't get you into trouble. Now, those two American journalists who arrived late last night—they have a car, I know. Will you go and ask one, or both, of them to come down to me at once? Say that I'm an Englishman, and tell them that I want help."

The girl Gretchen nodded; she seemed almost too overcome by the awful ordeal through which she had been to speak. She hurried away, and in a few minutes one of the Americans poked his head in at the door.

"No time to waste words," said Dick. "I'm an Englishman. Last night, for reasons of my own which I will tell you about later on, I was masquerading as an American. I am not a journalist That is quite true."

"Gee, are you the man that all the cry is about that they were going to shoot? Well, you don't look like the man we saw last night. Oh, yes, I guess you're British, right enough. Your American accent was pretty good, but your English is better. I know the real thing—those broad a's and so on. But that little girl Gretchen, what's she doing in the trouble?"

"Oh, she saved me; that's all," said Dick simply. "But, man alive, if you're an American, get a hustle on you, for if they do find me they'll shoot her as well as me. Now, you've got a motor car, haven't you? Very well, then, lend me a motor cap, a pair of goggles, and a motor coat, and I'll get away as your chauffeur. Oh, it'll be an easy job! I don't suppose you've got a chauffeur with you, have you?"

"No," said the American; "we're driving ourselves. But that don't matter, for if it comes to the worst we can say you were lost, and have only just turned up. Gee, that's a good idea! We'll have you out of this in five shakes of a cow's tail."

Off went the American, and returned in a few minutes with a motor cap, a pair of goggles, and a coat. Dick discarded the mouldy old coat and resumed his own garment again, and, with the collar of the motor coat turned up and wearing the goggles and the cap pulled well over his ears, he walked straight out of the tool shed, through the shrubbery, and up to the front of the hotel where the Americans' car was waiting.

"Get the girl here," whispered Dick. "I want to thank her and to say good-bye."

"Can we have some cigars, Fraulein Gretchen, served by your own fair fingers as a last favour?" cried the American.

He winked, and Gretchen knew what he meant, and she brought out the box of cigars herself.

"I shall never forget you, never, never, never, and there's a girl I love who will be thinking of you too. Goodbye, you brave, you noble girl, and to a German one day I will repay my debt."

The cigars were selected and lit, and just at that moment the German commanding officer strolled up to the car.

"Going along now, gentlemen?" he said. "Well, good speed to you. Perhaps we shall meet at the front. And, by the way, as a special favour, with regard to the escape of that spy, you might perhaps be able to keep the matter out of your paper, eh?"

"Oh, yes, certainly, certainly! Always glad to oblige anyone," was the hearty reply. "Now, then, Hooker, get a move on!"

Dick, addressed as Hooker, the chauffeur, jumped into the driving seat, touched up the car, and away she went, bearing him into—safety.

"Which way shall we go?" asked Dick, when he had driven a couple of miles outside the town.

"Gee, go straight ahead as far as I can tell by the map. We want to get to Berlin. But, say, perhaps you'll just pull up on the roadside here and let us have a chat? We're kind of interested in you."

Dick stopped the car, and was soon telling the two journalists all about himself

"So you know young Perry Carton, of the American Embassy in Berlin, do you?" said one of them delightedly. "Well, if Perry Carton backed you, gee, you must be about the goods! Say, you've got a nerve, ain't you? An American journalist, and you swanked the Kaiser out of a permit too! Well, if that ain't what a real journalist would have done! We forgive you, we forgive you. And now, what's your next move?"

"Well, I want to get to Berlin. I've a girl waiting there for me, you know. But I must tell you that I'm not a bit like what I appear to be, for, as they say in glorious melodrama, this is a disguise, and the worst of it is I can't get it off unless I can get a special preparation to remove it. And I can't go back to Berlin in this face, you know, for some of Baumeister's people would spot me at once as the John Hooston who was turned out of their little city."

"Nice quiet times we live in, eh?" said one of the Americans, turning to his friend.

"Well, now," he went on to Dick, "what about getting the stuff to clean up your face with?"

"Oh, I can get that in the nearest town at any chemist's," answered Dick.

And so into the nearest town Dick drove his two new friends, pulled up at the first chemist's, obtained the necessary ingredients for removing the well-applied disguise from his face, and when at a considerable disfance from the town again he set to work to make himself appear as he really was.

The Americans' car was provided with every convenience, including a Thermos flask, which had been filled with hot water at the last stoppage; there was a little india-rubber basin and soap and towels, and after a vigorous scrubbing and drying Dick stood before them the handsome, open-faced young fellow that he really was.

"Well, if that ain't a licker!" said one of the Americans in genuine admiration. "And now for Berlin!"

The car started off again, and after a merry run for about twenty or thirty miles they came to a town which was evidently the junction of an important railway line. Here everything was animation and bustle. Sentries were posted on the outskirts of the town, and the car was stopped.

"Your papers?" demanded the sentry.

The two journalists showed their passports; the sentry looked at them, and then turned to speak to his superior, who had just come up, showing him the passports.

"These passports are quite in order, gentlemen," said the officer in English—it was astonishing how many German officers spoke our language — "but haven't you one for your chauffeur? We have our orders to be very particular, for a spy, an English spy, allowing himself to be an American journalist, escaped one morning, and it has since been ascertained that he escaped once before from the train in which he had been sent out of Berlin. He is getting quite a notoriety. He goes under the name of Hooston, John Hooston, and says that he is attached to the Chicago Herald. His mother also was in Berlin, living with two Dutch people named Van Donk, but they've been arrested."

Dick gave an involuntary start—"and all that is wanted now is to get this Mr John Hooston himself. We have had all this news by telegraph and telephone this morning. The authorities attach great importance to the capture of this man."

"Why, that must be the fellow we saw last night!" exclaimed one of the Americans. "Quite right. John Hooston said he was connected with the Chicago Herald. Ah, he was a lad, wasn't he? Why, that's our paper, you know."

"Well, the commanding officer has satisfied himself about you two gentlemen, and we shall be pleased to speed you on your way. But your chauffeur, I am afraid, we shall have to detain till we have made further inquiries. When did you arrive in Germany, then?" he went on, turning to Dick.

"Last July a year," said Dick.

"Name and address where you lived, the police station where you reported on taking up your residence in this country, and the one where you reported on leaving where you last resided? Also when did you lose your passport, and why have you not procured another one?"

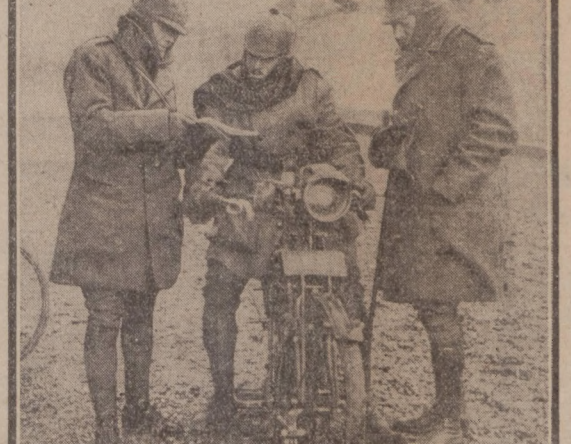
Dick knew that he was in a tight corner. The matter of the papers was always a difficulty in Germany, where they are so bureaucratic, and where, especially in this war time, everyone has to carry papers of identification—that is, unless he is of German birth.

Dick invented something on the spur of the moment, but the officer looked at him.

"You lie, and you know you are lying," the officer commented, and turned again to the two Americans.

"I regret, gentlemen, to have to take stern measures," he said, "but your chauffeur is telling me lies, and it is, therefore, doubly my duty to detain him."

GOOD NEWS FROM THE BELGIAN COAST.



One of the most important duties of the motor despatch rider is the collecting of reports from the numerous outlook stations on the Belgian coast, where the Allies are now making considerable progress. Here we see patrols and despatch rider in communication.

He turned to two soldiers whom he had summoned to him by a wave of his hand.

"Pull him out of the car!" he said.

"Oh, don't trouble. I'll get out myself!" said Dick.

"All right, I'll take the rug," said one of the Americans, leaning over to take the thick skin rug that was over Dick's knees—for the wind was cold for the man who was driving.

And as the American did so Dick felt something heavy being slipped into the pocket of the motor coat he was wearing, and his hand closed over it. It was a revolver which the American had slipped there unperceived by the officer. Well, anyway, if the worst came to the worst he would have a chance of fighting for his life, thought Dick.

"I'll get out," he said, "though I don't know what good that will do you."

"Search him," commanded the officer.

Now, the idea that he would be searched all of a sudden had not entered into Dick's calculation, and he remembered that in the pockets of his own coat, which he was still wearing underneath the motoring coat, there were several papers connected with the identity of John Hooston, the man for whom the Germans were looking. What a fool, what a double-distilled fool, he had been not to destroy them.

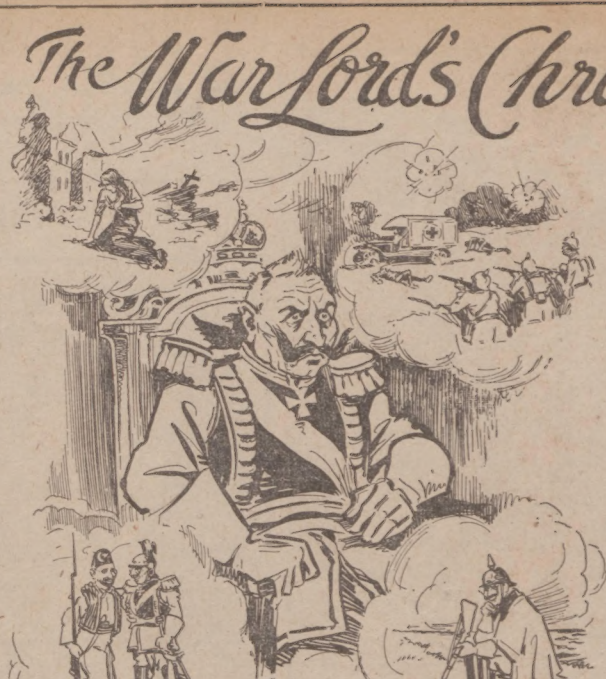
"I'm—yes, um!" said the officer. "Notebook. Nothing of much importance there." For there were only just a few rough notes such as any journalist might make.

But at length the officer came to the sheet on which was the Emperor's signature.

"Ah, ah," he said, drawing a long breath. "Now quickly, his other papers. Ah, yes, we've got him; we've got him! This is John Hooston, the very man we're looking for. John Hooston at last! No more escapes for you, Mr John Hooston. Got him at last; got him at last!"

This is the tightest corner that Dick has ever been in. Will he manage to wriggle out of it and get to Berlin to save Ellice? Do not miss next week's splendid long instalment.

The War Lord's Christmas



"TWAS Christmas Eve, and never had there been such a Christmas Eve since the world began. All was still in the palace of the last of the Hohenzollerns, and from the fretful, troubled city there came no exultant cry of "Hoch der Kaiser." "Hochs" were at a premium in Berlin.

"One—two—three—four——"

The clock was chiming the hour, and the War Lord's face was troubled. It showed grey and haggard as he counted the chimes.

As the twelfth chime he rose and stopped the clock. "Twas Christmas.

The War Lord bent over the map of the world and trailed his finger along the line to Calais—then on to Paris. A swoop across the Channel and he was in London—London!

"Ten thousand devils take the British! But I will be Emperor of Europe yet—Emperor—of—Europe!"

He mouthed the words slowly, as if they tasted sweet.

"Gott is mitt us!" he chuckled.. "Next Christmas I will be in London. I wonder—if—if I could only be sure—if I could but see into the future."

Something stirred, and the heavy window curtains shook. A cold air, chill and unearthly, seemed to fill the room.

"Who is—there?" he quavered. "Ach, nobody. It was only—only the wind."

"Man!" came a hollow voice, and a spectral hand was laid upon the Imperial shoulder.

"Who—are—you?" plaintively asked the War Lord. "Who—speaks?"

"I am the Spirit of Christmas," was the answer. "Come."

The spectre hand was ice cold, and though the thing had a voice and filmy shape, William could not guess its sex.

Slowly it dawned upon the War Lord that the great opportunity of life had come. The Spirit might unveil the future.

"Herr Spirit, I understand. You have come to cheer me. Are you the Spirit of this Christmas of all time."

"Nay. I was at the beginning, and will be until the last. I have been with you fifty-five times upon this day. I am the Spirit of the Christmas of all time."

The War Lord's eyes brightened.

"The future—show me the future," he pleaded. "Will I wear a glorious crown—the Crown of Europe—twelve months hence?"

"You will know the future?" the Spirit asked impassively.

"Yes," was the eager response. "I cannot sleep at nights because—because I fear."

"Then he who seeks to know the future must look back upon the past and know the present. Come!"

The War Lord would have rung for the Imperial motor and his bodyguard, but the Spirit stayed his hand.

"Touch the hem of my robe," was the command, and William of Prussia, greatest of Hohenzollerns, who was used to ordering, meekly obeyed.

Instantly a blare of trumpets sounded, and a cavalcade of soldiers swept past. They were cheering wildly, and flags fluttered in the breeze. The German Eagle was everywhere

"Victory," gasped the Kaiser. "My return from the capture of London and Paris. But—why—why does Bismarck ride with us, and—who is that alone?"

"Look again."

The Kaiser laughed.

"Myself," he muttered. "I wanted to see into the future—not the past. Why, that one riding alone is—myself!"

"The future is moulded out of the present and the past," slowly exclaimed the spectral guide. "A pleasing sight, O Man!"

A Bad Beginning.

"That was a great day," smiled the War Lord. "I recall it all. The crown of my fathers had come to me, and how the people cheered when I passed in at the Brandenburg Gate. I hear their singing now. Eh, what's that man saying?"

A workman and his wife were on the fringe of the crowd to see the wonderful sight, and the man was speaking

"He looks a King, my dear," he said. "Bold and proud. If the old man Bismarck does not keep a hold on him he'll take his own road. They say he's cast off his mother, the Empress, the sweet lady——"

"Yes, Carl, and it's a bad beginning," chimed in his spouse. "The man that breaks his mother's heart never prospers."

The War Lord's face grew grey with passion as he listened, and his lips twitched at the corners. He would have struck the babblers, but the Spirit dragged him on.

The cheers had died away, and one man alone remained. 'Twas Bismarck, the old man. He walked slowly from the Palace. He had been thrust out.

"What's that he's saying?" whispered the Kaiser. "I've often wondered what—what he really thought. A doddering fool—who was in my way."

"Listen."

"Ambition—by that sin fell the angels, and this mad Hohenzollern Prinneling is riding to a fall. I would have held his hand, but he must travel the destined road—to ruin. Let him go, the fool. What care I? I have my beer and my dogs."

The vision melted away, and the Kaiser's visage was grim and dark.

How the years fled. Christmas after Christmas speeded past, and he saw with regret his first-born exceed the age when spanking over the Imperial paternal knee would have been effective. The Spirit next showed him William, jun., roystering with his boon friends.

"Der Tag!" he cried. "And you've me to thank for it. I just told that fool dad of mine to get out or get under—in other words, that I'd more push, and would speed things up if he shuffled off."

The Kaiser covered his face with his hands.

"Take me home—home," he wailed. "Even mine own son."

To the Bitter End.

But the Spirit was relentless. "To the bitter end. We must hasten on."

The spark had been set to the war powder, and the Kaiser saw himself sign his name to the deed of war. The Imperial Chancellor's mask-like face bent over him.

"'Tis done, Hollweg," he said. "The Day' has come."

There was elation in his voice then. He couldn't raise it now somehow, not even over Von Hindenburg's despatches.

Then his words came back to him.

"Strike through Belgium as we planned. France must not have time. Fire and sword to Belgium, and back our way to Paris. Then Britain's hour will strike!"

"Touch me once more the hem of my robe."

The Spirit commanded, and lamb-like the Kaiser obeyed.

"How long have we taken" he chattered.

"'Twas in '68 you took up the Crown. We are now at the present. Come, that road leads to the future."

. . . .

A dismal, moaning sound fell upon the Kaiser's ears as they sped through the night. It seemed to grow as they whirled into the darkness. But all was not dark, for there were fierce red lights beneath like funeral pyres.

"What are these, Spirit?" gasped the War Lord.

"Cathedrals, more than likely. That one that gleams bright is Louvain."

William shuddered.

"I wept over that," he pleaded. "Didn't I cable to the President of America saying that my heart bled for Louvain."

The Spirit looked on him accusingly. "Man! I was at your side when you wrote!" it said. "There was joy in your heart!"

The Kaiser grew uncomfortable.

The moaning sound grew in volume, and out of the night came a woman's cry.

"My children—my little Albert and Babette! They were so pretty—and Mon Dieu! I loved them so!"

The War Lord looked downward, and he saw a woman searching amidst the ruins that still smouldered. Her hair was hanging dishevelled about her face, and her hands were scorched and blackened with grasping the smouldering wood. But still she searched on.

"Don't you hear me, pretty ones? It is mamma who calls!"

The Bereaved Mother's Prayer.

A man in peasant dress crawled out of a hole. He held his hands to his eyes as if to shut out the woman in her sorrow.

"Mon Dieu!"

That was all he said, but the woman heard him. There were no tears in her eyes. The War Lord almost wished there had been.

"My little ones!" she wailed.

"There are no little ones left in Belgium when the Prussians have gone!" cried the man brokenly. "The laughter of the children will never be heard—any more! He who is our foe wills it!"

"You have seen them! Jan! Speak—speak!" wailed the mother falling at his feet. "We were so happy—my little ones and me!"

The War Lord hung his head.

"Where are her children? Why doesn't the man speak?"

"He is more merciful than the men who obey you!" came the reply. "Let us follow her! I think the mother will find her babes in the field down yonder! A troop of Uhlans passed that way after firing the house!"

The Kaiser felt himself dragged on, and once more he saw the mother.

A bitter heart-bursting scream broke the silence. She had found her lost ones—dead.

"God in heaven!" wailed the woman. "Deal with him who has murdered my little ones as thou Last promised! Vengeance—God—into thy hands!"

The Kaiser shuddered, and he clutched at the Spirit's robe.

"Take me—away!" he moaned. "I will give orders that that troop of Uhlans be shot, every one, so that the guilty may not escape!"

But the Spirit heeded him not.

"Thou art the man the woman meant," said the Spirit. "You are the All-Powerful, the All-Highest, the Emperor!"

"I did not know—till now."

"It is the same all the way," replied the Spirit. "See, over yonder. That man has been sitting there for hours and hours."

The Spirit guided the War Lord closer, and they could hear the man's voice as he crooned over something held in his arms.

"My little Jean's wooden gun," he kept saying. "Last Christmas it was hanging on the tree. No tree now, no candles, no Jean!"

"What does he mean? The poor creature is mad. Why does he fondle a little wooden gun?"

There was tense silence. Then the Spirit laid its hand on the man's head. For a moment he was still, then with a cry he sprang up and stretched out his hands.

"Mon Dieu! They killed him because he had a little wooden gun. Thou wilt punish! Jean! Jean! I—your own father—coming!"

And the wooden gun fell at the Kaiser's feet.

In the British Lines!

Beads of sweat—cold, deathly sweat—stood on the War Lord's brow as he turned to flee.

The Emperor passed a somewhat "restless" night.
—Berlin Press

But the dark appalled him. He could not face the dark alone with the cries of the women and the smouldering fires.

"Halt! Who goes there!"

The Kaiser's hair stood up like bristles.

"The British lines! I can't—daren't go there. They hate me."

"And pity!" added the Spirit. "Come, Knight of the Shining Armour and the Mailed Hand. What should dismay thee? This way lies the future."

They passed within the British lines, and the Spirit halted at a trench deep dug in the brown earth. Two soldiers were awake, for they were on the watch.

"Lor' lummo! Wot a Crissmas, Bill!" said one. "Wonder wot the folks at 'ome are doin'?"

"Dunno, 'Erbert. 'Spects my old folks will 'ave gone to bye-bye!"

Herbert puffed stolidly at his pipe.

"We would be there if it wisn't for that blinkin' Kiser!"

"Right, O! Measley sort o' bloke, too. Off his rocker. Clean barmy!" muttered Bill. "That last lot o' Germins we captured said so, an' they ought to know. Wot's his game anyhow?"

"Thought 'e wis IT." answered the other. "Perishing cold, ain't it, Bill. But we ain't so bad off as them Germs. They ain't got food—'cept the officers! It's like murder 'avin' to shoot 'em down. The blarsted Kiser, 'e says Cally must be taken! Counts 'is men is only fit to be shot like rabbits. Wot does 'e care!"

"Nuffin. But God'll 'ave a pretty big bill 'gainst him when 'is number's up!"

"Wouldn't care if the blighters fought like genelmen," continued Bill. "Mean, blinkin'—censored—'ounds, wiv their firin' on the Red Cross an' wimmin an' children! Wot I says is this ere Kiser who calls isself the special pal o' God up in 'Eaven could stop it all and fight fair 'f he was a man. But he's a blasted microbe. Strikes me God's fed up—an' never had no great likin' for him. Wimmen and little kiddies—ugh!"

The soldier spat on the ground, and the Kaiser's cheeks grew livid under the torture.

Home Truths.

Suddenly the Kaiser felt himself whirled through space. He never knew how many miles they travelled—Spirit and he—through the abyssmal dark.

Straight for the German lines the Spirit made, and to a house where half a dozen generals were gathered.

"Ah! This is better," cried the Kaiser chirpily, and he breathed freely once more.

"My generals preparing for victory. I see Von Faker there. He is writing a despatch."

Spirit and Kaiser entered just as Von Faker groaned.

"I can't keep this up. I'm a soldier, not an Æsop or a Hans Andersen! Where shall we have our next victory, my dear Von Kluck?"

Von Kluck growled

"Tell the fool anything!" was his answer. "I wish you would have the courage to put in 'For Germany's sake stay in Berlin.' We might stand a chance then."

"And keep his pup with him!" added another. "The world will think we are all thieves since that affair of the chateau!"

The War Lord's face was scarlet now, and his hand went to the hilt of his sword. It had frozen in the scabbard.

"Traitors. Is this the future, Spirit? Have I no friends—no one who cares!"

"Perhaps if we took a run to Constantinople, calling upon Francis Joseph in the passing——"

"No! I know what he thinks. I—I have seen enough, Spirit. I am not well—one of my feet is this the end?"

"To the end!" was the grim answer. "Behold the future!"

In horror the Kaiser staggered back, and the hair upon his head slowly whitened. The fierce moustache that had become the symbol of Prussianism became as the Christmas snow, and drooped, drooped as the War Lord wrung his hands.

. . . .

It was no ordinary throng that surged through the Unter Den Linden before the Kaiser's gaze. 'Twas plain to see that something was afoot. The burghers' faces were black, and their scowls as they passed.

No German band blared forth "Die Wacht am Rhein," but suddenly a thousand voices smote the silence in a m

The Post Sunday Special

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1914.

A GERMAN HOSPITAL TRAIN.

A picture taken from a German paper depicts the scene on board an hospital train bound for Germany. A wounded soldier is making a dying request.

"KAISER BILL" AS TARGET.

Nothing can depress our men at the front. Snowing or raining, in wind or fog, they manage to amuse themselves. Just now a very favourite and seasonable spor is to make a snow man of "Kaiser Bill." The Iron Cross hung round the snow man's neck makes a good target, and the Tommy who first knocks off "Kaiser Bill's" head is sure of a rousing cheer from his "pals."

VIVE LA FRANCE!

A scene in Soppe-le-Bas, Alsace-Lorraine, when the French occupied the town. A French soldier is seen giving a lesson in French to the young Alsatians, who greeted their entry into the village by crying "Vive la France."

THE NEW SULTAN.

His Highness Prince Hussein Kamel Pasha, who has accepted the Sultanate of Egypt. He was born on December 20, 1853. Prince Hussein is the eldest living Prince of the family of Mehemet Ali, and is very popular in Egypt, where he has earned the title of "Father of the Fellah." The new Sultan of Egypt is an uncle of the ex-Khedive, and son of Ismail Pasha.

A BELGIAN CHURCH NEAR THE "LINES."

Here in this Belgian church, situated near the firing line, we see manifest in this strange Christmastide the spirit of good-will. The church is the haven for all, the soldier finding welcome rest and shelter and the bereaved and anxious worshippers spiritual comfort and peace.

THE SWISS PRESIDENT.

There has been some talk of the Germans making preparations and plans for the invasion and annexation of Switzerland. The President of Switzerland, whose picture we reproduce, was once visited by the Kaiser, who on that occasion posed for the first time as a Republican. He was dressed in the uniform of the Swiss Republic. The Swiss people are fully prepared for any developments.

HOW A FRENCH OUTPOST SPENT XMAS.

In the Argonne district the winter has been particularly severe, and snow has fallen very heavily. A French outpost is seen keeping a sharp lookout on the enemy's trenches, which are only 100 yards away.

MEN WHO CRUSHED SOUTH AFRICAN REBELLION

The Royalists leaving for the front. These are some of the men who, under the leadership of General Botha and General muts, made such short work of the South African rebellion, which Germany engineered with so much pain and trouble.

ANOTHER GRAND PAGE OF PICTURES NEXT WEEK.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY D. C. THOMSON & CO., LTD., GLASGOW.